

WILD WEST



A MAGAZINE CONTAINING STORIES. SKETCHES Etc. OF WESTERN LIFE.

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YOUNG WILD WEST ON THE TRAIL; OR, OUTWITTING THE REDSKINS. *AND OTHER STORIES* *By AN OLD SCOUT.*



Wild had to shoot now, and he started right in at it. The Indian dropped, and then, holding fast to Lena Merrill's hand, he dashed in the direction he had come from when he set out.

WILD WEST WEEKLY

A Magazine Containing Stories, Sketches, Etc., of Western Life

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— OR —

OUTWITTING THE REDSKINS

By AN OLD SCOUT

CHAPTER I.

CAPTURED BY THE SIOUX.

One bright and warm day in early summer a few years ago five horsemen might have been seen riding along a trail leading to the mountains near the dividing line of the then Territories of Wyoming and Dakota.

It was near the hour of noon, and the riders were hastening to reach a suitable spot to camp, where they could find water and fodder for their horses.

The most striking person of the five was a youth of nineteen, who rode a magnificent sorrel stallion with flowing mane and a tail that almost reached the ground.

The boy's athletic figure was attired in a neat-fitting suit of buckskin that was ornamented with scarlet fringe, and his handsome face was set off by his flowing chestnut locks and broad sombrero.

Three of his companions were attired similarly, and the fourth wore the ordinary apparel of a ranchman.

The young fellow on the sorrel stallion was Young Wild West, the prince of the saddle and champion deadshot of the West.

The youth about his own age was his chum, Jim Dart, while the other two clad in hunting suits were Cheyenne Charlie and Jack Robedee, two well-known scouts who had lately been in the employ of the government.

The fifth rider was Wal Wisp, an old-time Westerner, who had just sold his ranch to Young Wild West, and was accompanying him to Weston in the Black Hills, where he was to get his cash and a piece of property that had been accepted in payment for Roaring Ranch, which was the name given to the ranch he had sold.

Young Wild West, Cheyenne Charlie, Jim Dart and Jack Robedee were partners on a quadruple claim in Weston, and they were all stockholders and officers of the Wild West Mining and Improvement Company, an organization which had been the means of building up the town of Weston and making it one of the wealthiest and liveliest places in the West.

"The last place we went into camp when we came over can't be very far from here," Young Wild West said, as he slackened his pace and began to scrutinize their surroundings carefully.

"Tain't more'n half a mile from here, I reckon," retorted Cheyenne Charlie. "I kin tell by that blasted pine over there. I noticed it when we came along."

"What is that hanging to that limb?" asked Jim Dart, as he turned his gaze to the blasted pine mentioned by the scout.

Young Wild West gave a significant nod as he looked at the object.

"Indians!" he exclaimed. "That is part of the headgear of a Sioux chief, or I am no judge."

He turned his horse to the left and made for the tree, followed by the rest.

The next minute he was holding in his hand a tuft of wild turkey feathers sewed to a piece of buffalo skin.

The boy was right when he said it was part of an Indian chief's headgear that Jim Dart's sharp eyes had noticed.

There was no mistaking it; Young Wild West knew too much about the redskins to be at a loss to understand what it was.

"I wonder what the red villains are doing around here?" he remarked. "It may be that some peaceable Indian lost this, but I am inclined to doubt it. Ah! there are the prints of moccasined feet, too. There has been more than one of the reds here, and that not very long ago, as the tracks are fresh."

"Some of old Sitting Bull's gang scoutin' around, I'll bet," said Jack Robedee. "Boys, we've got to keep our eyes peeled."

"I hope ther reds ain't on the war-path," observed Wal Wisp, with an uneasy shrug of his shoulders. "I don't fancy gittin' into a scrimmage with ther varmints. I don't know which is ther worst—Indians or renegades. I allus make it a p'int to give both all ther room I kin."

"Oh, if there are not more than twenty or thirty of them we shouldn't worry," answered Young Wild West. "It may be that they are simply hunting, and would not bother us if they met us."

"We'd better light out of here, though, hadn't we?" queried Wisp, in an anxious tone of voice.

"What! And go without our dinner? I'm hungry, and my mouth has been watering this last hour for some of the steak from the bear Charlie shot this morning. We will stop for an hour or so, Indians or no Indians."

"That's ther way to talk," nodded Jack Robedee.

"You kin bet your booths we'll stop long enough to cook ther steaks," Cheyenne Charlie chimed in. "I jest dote on bear meat, an' I ain't goin' to allow any Indians to knock me out of my dinner—not if I kin help it."

The ranchman said no more, but it was more than evident that he was very anxious to get away from the vicinity as soon as possible.

Wal Wisp did not possess any more than the average nerve, though he was rather given to braggadocio and boasting when he thought he had the upper hand of a man.

The boy, who was plainly the leader of the party, started his horse ahead as though nothing out of the ordinary had happened, the others following him.

It was barely more than two minutes when they came upon the spot they were looking for.

"Now for the bear meat!" cried Cheyenne Charlie, as he dismounted.

"An' I'll start a fire in short order," added Jack Robedee, as he put the saddle and tied his horse to a tree.

Jack always attended to the fires and the cooking when they were out on the trail.

Somehow he appeared to like it, and though his three partners were not averse to that kind of work, they were just as well satisfied to let him do it.

There was no lack of fuel, so Jack soon had a blaze going.

The bear steaks were then quickly produced, and after washing them well in the little brook, they were salted and put on the fire to broil.

A coffee-pot was then brought out, and a small bag of government biscuit.

Jim Dart furnished the coffee beans from his capacious saddle-bags.

Jim was very fond of coffee, and he always carried it with him, no matter where he went.

In half an hour's time the five were ready to sit down to quite a substantial meal.

The horses were munching the rich, succulent grass that grew in abundance in the little glade they had halted in, and everything was the picture of contentment.

Suddenly the sharp crack of a rifle rang out, and a bullet buried itself in a tree within a foot of Cheyenne Charlie's head.

All thoughts of the dinner instantly vanished from the minds of the five.

They grabbed their rifles and scurried for cover.

There were a number of trees there, and once behind these Young Wild West and his friends began to look around to see if they could catch sight of the one who had fired the shot.

At the first glance he took the young prince of the saddle could not see a sign of a human being, but when he looked more carefully the second time he saw a tufted head moving slowly toward them.

The grass was rank and thick, and as Young Wild West looked he could see more than one.

They were Indians, and they were sneaking up in their true style to murder the whites and steal their horses and other belongings.

Wild could not tell how many there were of the red demons, but he figured that there must be more than half a dozen of them, by the looks of the waving grass.

"I see them coming!" he exclaimed in a whisper. "Here goes for number one!"

His rifle was at his shoulder instantly.

Crack!

As the report rang out a form leaped into the air and a death-cry sounded on the atmosphere.

"That's one, sure enough!" nodded Cheyenne Charlie. "Now——"

Just what he was going to say will never be known, for at that instant the war-whoop of a score of Indians came to their ears, and out of the tall grass the red fiends arose and came bounding toward them.

A grim smile came upon the face of Young Wild West, and there was a dangerous gleam in his eyes.

"Give it to them, boys!" he said.

Then the firing began.

Wal Wisp started in and kept his end up.

But he was too nervous to make all his shots tell.

It was not that way with the four partners, though.

Never once did they press the trigger till they had a bead on the redskin they wanted to hit.

Four fell at the first fire, and then the advancing Sioux dropped into the grass.

They had not bargained on such a reception.

"They will not go back to the tactics they were practising when I first saw them," said Wild. "They will try to creep close enough to make a quick rush and overpower us. The only way to make them change again is to pick off a couple of them."

Up to this time only one shot had been fired by the Indians.

Evidently they did not intend to waste any shots by shooting at the trees behind which our friends were crouching.

It was really a trying position that our friends found themselves placed in.

Though they had ample warning that the redskins were about, they had not thought they would prove hostile, since they had been behaving themselves pretty well of late.

But Young Wild West was equal to the emergency.

"Take a shot apiece at the moving grass," he whispered.

Then four shots rang out, and one death-yell was the result.

One of the shots had proved to be telling, anyway.

The grass became suddenly still.

In order to reach them the sneaking red fiends would have to cross a comparatively open space with only a rock or boulder here and there to dodge behind.

When they got to the edge of this spot they would be within fifty yards of the whites they hoped to kill and rob.

"We mustn't let 'em reach them boulders if we kin help it," remarked Charlie.

"No, not by a jugful!" chimed in Robedee.

"What are we goin' to do about it?" queried Wal Wisp, anxiously.

"Do about it!" echoed Wild. "Why, this is a case of do or die! I've been in the same fix lots of times before. Just keep your eyes and ears open, now; something is going to happen very shortly."

The young fellow was watching while he whispered these words, and the next instant his rifle spoke again.

The result was startling to his companions, for an Indian tumbled from a rocky eminence off to the left and came rolling down the rocks toward them.

But he was dead, so there was nothing to be feared from him.

"How in thunder did that feller git up there?" cried Robedee.

"They are trying to hem us in from all sides," answered Wild.

"There ain't any chance of 'em doin' it, is there?" Wisp asked.

"I can't tell. I don't know how many of them there are. It seems as though there must be two gangs of them, for I am certain that none of those who attempted to charge on us a little while ago could reach the spot where I brought that fellow down from without us seeing them, anyway."

The words were scarcely out of Young Wild West's mouth when a volley rang out, and half a dozen bullets whistled past them from a point almost directly behind them.

"Drop!" cried the brave boy, acting as coolly as though he was simply engaged in a practise game of some kind.

They did drop, but as they did so another volley was fired from the same source.

Wal Wisp gave a howl of agony and dropped his rifle.

"I'm done for!" he cried. "One of ther redskins has fetched me!"

"I reckon you ain't goin' to die from a bullet in ther arm," retorted Cheyenne Charlie. "We've got to make a fight for our lives, so shoot with your left hand—an' shoot to kill!"

Young Wild West, though surprised at the number of attacking Indians, was not disheartened.

"Make for the horses!" he exclaimed. "It is our only chance now."

Like a whirlwind he sprang to his feet and made for the sorrel stallion.

The horses were grazing in a spot that was somewhat shielded by stunted trees, and though the bullets whistled all around them, the five managed to get to them.

The saddles had not been removed, though the bits had been taken out of the mouths of the animals to give them a chance to nibble at the luxuriant grass.

Strange to say, no shots were fired by the Indians as they reached the horses.

Just why this was the whites did not know.

But they took advantage of it, and quickly untethered them and leaped into the saddles.

Wal Wisp's wounded arm made it a little difficult for him to mount, but he did so with amazing quickness.

A fierce yell went up now, coming from all sides of them, it seemed.

Instead of a score, there now appeared to be a hundred of the Indians.

They were all on foot, too.

They now rushed for their intended victims from three different directions, brandishing their weapons, but not firing a shot.

"Come on, boys!" shouted Young Wild West. "I understand the game now. They want our horses. That is the reason they don't shoot."

The five horses now bounded forward simultaneously, and as they did so the four partners opened fire on the rapidly approaching redskins with their revolvers.

Wild chose the direction to take, the others following.

The Indians were so close to them that almost every shot found a mark, and though they were dropping right and left, the fiends came on.

"Come on! We will get through them yet!"

As our hero said this, a fresh bunch of the copper-skinned

horses suddenly rose right before them, and the next moment they were right in their midst.

Though they fought with desperation, they were quickly overpowered and dragged from their horses.

The frightened steeds made a break for liberty, but the wily Indians were very quick, and all save one of them was captured.

The one that got away was Young Wild West's handsome sorrel.

The triumphant horde of Sioux braves did not dispatch the whites on the spot, but made them prisoners.

CHAPTER II.

THE ATTACK ON THE EMIGRANT TRAIN.

At a few minutes before sunset on the day the events just described took place a caravan of emigrants was making its way along the trail leading to the frontier town of Steuben.

The train of wagons had been on the march since early morning, and they were now hastening for a small grove of trees that could be seen ahead of them.

They had just crossed the border line of Wyoming from Nebraska, and being aware of the fact, Punch Joline, the reliable old guide, was anxious to pitch the camp.

They had gone far enough for one day, he reckoned.

There were fully a dozen wagons in the train, some of which were the old-fashioned prairie schooners, the same as had been used by the Mormons on their journey to Salt Lake City some years before.

Men, women and children were plentiful in that band of emigrants. Days before they had headed for the setting sun, in the hope of bettering their fortunes there.

The government was giving away land to all who would agree to till it, and as the soil of the eastern part of Wyoming had the reputation of being remarkably fertile, the pilgrims figured on making out well from the start.

They had also figured on meeting with hostile Indians—at least some of the men had, for they were well provided with arms and ammunition.

At that period the Sioux Indians were very troublesome.

Sitting Bull was located somewhere in the hills, where he had been driven by the United States cavalry after his murderous ambush of General Custer and his gallant band.

At times the Sioux were perfectly peaceful, and then again they would break out and commit terrible depredations on the whites who had pushed their way to the unsettled West.

This particular band that was emigrating West had come as far as it could by train, and then the wagon train was fited out to take them the rest of the distance.

It was now the close of the eleventh day since the hopeful travelers had started with the wagons, and the women and children were becoming tired of riding over the boundless prairie and rounding the gray, rugged mountains.

"There's water a-plenty just ahead," said Punch Joline, the guide. "In ten minutes more we'll find as good a campin' ground as we could wish for. Come on, boys! Jog up them oxen a little!"

"All right," came the cheery retort from the head teamster.

Oxen, while they are very strong and capable of pulling an immense load, are very slow beasts.

But they seemed to know what was wanted of them now, for they set out on a jog when the teamsters cracked their whips, and in a trifle inside of ten minutes they came to a halt in the little grove.

There was the water and the succulent grass for them to feed upon, and there was also plenty of dry wood for the teamsters to kindle necessary fires to do the cooking.

The men went right to work, and in a short time they had the wagons drawn up in a circle, a precaution that is almost invariably taken by sojourners across the prairies in uncertain times when it is hard to tell just when they will be attacked by some roving band of Indians in search of plunder.

Now the tired oxen were resting and nibbling the grass at the same time. The horses were hobbled so they could not stray far from the camp, and the women were cooking the evening meal for their husbands.

Snatches of song could be heard here, there and everywhere, the women humming their favorite songs and the men whistling cheerfully in anticipation of a good supper and a night's rest.

Half an hour after the camp in the little grove of trees that showed up like a haven of rest an hour before was the scene of a night of fearful combat.

The sun had now gone down, but the weather was clear and balmy, and the gentle breeze that came from the west was refreshing.

Among the plucky wayfarers who had braved the dangers of the wild country was a family named Merrill.

They consisted of Dan Merrill, his wife and a son and daughter.

The son had not reached his twentieth year, and bore the name of Joseph.

Everybody called him Joe for short, though, and he was known for his courage and coolness in the time of danger.

His sister was named Lena, and a prettier girl would have been hard to find.

She was two years Joe's junior, and was really the pride of the wagon train, since she was always light-hearted and singing to drive away the tediousness of the journey.

There was another person belonging to the train who would be bound to attract particular attention, no matter where he went.

He was a young man who had just reached his majority, and who was one of the guides who was assisting to get the outfit through to its destination.

Punch Joline was the main man in charge, but even he asked the opinion of the young man very often.

The two had just lighted their pipes after supper, and were standing against one of the quaint-looking wagons that made up the train, talking over the prospects.

"We'll be there inside of three days, I reckon, Hustling Hal," observed the old guide.

"Yes, if nothing happens to interfere with us," replied the young fellow called Hustling Hal, whose real name was Harold Hanby.

"You don't imagine that any redskins will bother us, do yer?"

"I can't say that I do imagine anything like that," and the really handsome face of the young man lighted up with a look that was encouraging to his older companion. "But, then," and an expression of doubt immediately crossed it, "you can't tell anything about it, Punch. The Sioux are liable to do anything just now. I bone everything will go right, though, and I believe it will. Still, you can't tell what might turn up. We have been very lucky so far. What Indians we have met seemed to be friendly enough."

"Yes; but maybe that was because there wasn't enough of 'em to do us any harm."

"I agree with you on that. If we should happen to meet a band of, say, a hundred, there would likely be trouble. But don't let us worry over it before it happens."

Hustling Hal walked off as he said this, and a smile lit up his face when he saw pretty Lena Merrill coming toward him.

The two had only known each other for a short ten days, but during that time they had become lovers.

It had even got so far that the young man had proposed to her and been accepted.

He was going to quit the company he was employed by when they got to Steuben and turn to ranching.

"What's the matter, Hal?" asked the girl, as she took him by the arm. "You look as though something is troubling you."

"Do I?" was the laughing retort. "Well, nothing is troubling me but the fact that I have got to wait a whole year before I can claim you as my wife."

"Well, don't worry about that. You know it is the wish of my father and mother that I become eighteen before marrying, and that won't be quite a year to wait, Hal. It is only a trifle over eleven months."

"Yes, eleven months and twenty-seven days. If that isn't pretty close to a year I miss my reckoning."

"Well, it will pass quickly enough. But, Hal, what were you and Punch Joline talking about?"

"I don't know what it was now, Lena. We were just passing a few remarks about the nice weather we were having, and so on."

"No, you were not talking about the weather together, for I noticed an anxious look on your face once or twice while you were conversing."

"You must have been watching me pretty closely," laughed Hustling Hal.

"Well, so I was. Now, tell me the truth, Hal, do you think there is liable to be any trouble with the Indians before we reach the end of our journey?"

"Why, what makes you ask such a question as that, little girl?"

"Well, you see, I dreamed last night that we were attacked by Indians, and that I was carried away by an ugly-

looking chief, who who was going to make me his squaw. It came into my mind afresh when I saw you and Punch Joline talking together, for it struck me that you were conversing about the Indians then."

"Nonsense! Don't let anything like that worry you, Lena. We are going to have good luck all the way through, and inside of three days we will be safely in Steuben."

"Won't I be glad when I do get there!" and the joy she felt showed on the girl's face.

The lovers talked for a long time after that on the subject that lovers generally use in their conversation, and finally it became time for the travelers to go to sleep for the night.

After kissing his pretty sweetheart good-night, Hustling Hal walked over to where the old guide was seated before the dying embers of a fire, and said:

"Punch, I would like to stand guard with you when it comes your turn to-night."

"Why, how's that? You did your turn last night."

"I know that, but I want to be with you when you go on."

"All right. I'm sure I don't know of a better man than you that I'd like to have. I don't go on till two o'clock, you know."

"I know that."

"Say, Hal, what's the matter with yer?" asked the old guide, as he got up from the fire and followed the young man to a secluded spot.

"Nothing," was the reply. "I didn't say there was anything the matter, did I?"

"No; but you talk jest as though there was. You ain't thinkin' that the Injuns are goin' to light on us, are yer?"

"Well, to tell the truth, I have got something of that sort in my head," answered Hustling Hal, shrugging his shoulders uneasily.

"I hate to hear yer talk that way, my boy."

"There is no particular cause for me to talk that way. I have got it on my mind, that's all."

"Ah, you thought you'd like to go on watch with me from two o'clock to gittin'-up time?"

"Yes; that is the time Indians are likely to show up, you know."

"Oh, yes; I know that well enough. Well, you kin stand watch with me an' welcome. Ther young feller, Joe Merrill, is on with me, you know."

"Yes; Lena's brother, you mean. He is not much more than a boy, but he is as good as a man at the business. I never saw a fellow from the East take to Western life as quickly as he does."

"An' ther gal seems to sorter take to it, too," said Punch, with a twinkle in his eye. "Leastwise, she seems to take to a feller what was born an' grewed up in ther West."

"Well, I guess she does like me, all right. I am going to marry her a year from now, Punch. You are the only one that knows it outside of her folks. So you needn't tell it to the men."

"I felt sure that it would make a match ther first day out. No; I won't mention it to any one. Don't be afraid of that."

The two talked a little while longer and then went to their sleeping quarters.

They were to go on duty at two o'clock, and when the old guide was called, Hustling Hal would get up, too.

Not long after that the camp was in the utmost stillness.

Everybody save the two men on guard were sound asleep.

The hours passed on, and the next two went on to relieve the first ones.

It was midnight, and after two hours it would be time for Punch Joline and Joe Merrill to go on.

The two hours slipped by, and the emigrants slept on.

Hustling Hal was sleeping as sound as any of the rest when suddenly he was aroused by a shake and the voice of the old guide.

"Come!" exclaimed Punch. "Git up, Hal, if you want to be awake with us ther rest of ther night."

The young man was up and on his feet instantly.

"I am ready," he answered.

The next minute he walked out, rifle in hand.

He found Joe Merrill rubbing his eyes to get thoroughly awake, and eager to do his turn at standing watch.

The three then got right down to business.

It was their duty to take a walk around the camp every few minutes, each traveling in an opposite direction and reporting as they met and passed.

That was the way it was when there were two; but now that there were three of them, two would have to be together part of the time.

And that was the way they worked it for about an hour.

Then Hustling Hal said he guessed he would take a big circuit around the little grove.

"It will kill time," he said; "and if there is any danger lurking I will be able to find it out all the quicker."

"All right," answered Punch. "Go ahead. I reckon we are goin' through ther night all right, though."

The young man left them, and then the old guide and the boy continued the watch alone.

Fifteen minutes passed, and then they suddenly heard the sounds of rapidly approaching footsteps.

"Who comes there?" called out the voice of Punch Joline in a low but impressive tone.

"It is I—Hal," was the whispered reply. "Hurry up and arouse the camp. A band of Indians will attack us when the first gray streaks show themselves in the east. I saw them, and I know."

"Jerusalem!" ejaculated the old guide.

But he did not ask the young man a single question just then. He made for the sleeping men as fast as his legs would carry him.

From one to the other he went, awaking them and cautioning them to make no noise.

If the Indians were so close it would not do to let them know that the camp was on the alert.

The campfires had long since gone out, and it was now the darkest part of the night.

No little excitement prevailed in the camp for the next few minutes, but there was very little noise.

The prairie travelers had been cautioned time and again during the journey that in case they were aroused during the night they must be silent, so as not to alarm the women and children.

Then the heads of families could awaken them if there was danger lurking.

When all the men were aroused they were told of the expected attack.

"Get your shootin' irons ready," Punch Joline told them, "an' then fix a good safe place for the wimmen an' children. I don't know how many of ther reds there are, but there must be a lot of 'em, unless they think they'll have an easy time of it by catchin' us nappin'."

It was really remarkable how the men managed to get the women and children together a few minutes later.

Two fallen trees were drawn close together and they were ordered to lie down between them.

That would keep them safe from the flying bullets.

"How did yer come to find ther redskins, Hal?" Punch asked Hustling Hal, when the hurried preparations had been made.

"It was an accident," was the reply, "and I was very lucky they did not find me. I walked out straight to the north for about a quarter of a mile, and then, just as I was going to turn and make a circle I heard a sound that made me jump with surprise. It was a couple of redskins talking in their own lingo, an' I made up my mind to see them, if I possibly could. I crept closer and soon caught a glimpse of them. They were mounted and had come to a halt while they talked. You know I understand a whole lot of the Sioux lingo, and I heard one of them say, as he pointed in the direction of our camp, that they would go back and tell their chief, so they could make the attack when the light began to show in the east. That was all I waited to hear, and I guess it was quite enough."

"I reckon it was, Hal. Well, it are beginnin' to show a little light now. I reckon——"

At that instant there was the cry of a night bird, or an imitation of one, right near them.

It was the signal for the attack, and no one knew it better than the two guides.

The word was passed for the men to be ready to die.

There were thirty men in the party, and each one of them was prepared to do his utmost.

With bated breath they waited.

A faint gray light began to show.

The darkness would soon leave them.

Suddenly the signal cry of the Indians rang out again.

This time it was repeated from a distance to the right.

Then all of a sudden the stillness was broken by a fierce warwhoop from many throats.

The attack had begun.

Like misty shadows fully a hundred Indians arose from the grass and rushed upon the emigrants, bring as they came.

Then it was that they see something they were not looking for.

"Let 'em have it, boys!" cried Punch Joline. "Don't aim too high, and make every shot tell."

Crack—crack—crack! Cr-a-a-ck!

The brave band of whites, who were defending all they held dear, fired a fusillade that brought the redskins to a standstill before they were within fifty yards of the cordon of wagons.

There were plenty of trees for the men to lie behind, and from them came streaks of fire.

The Sioux were appalled for the time being and beat a hasty retreat, leaving a dozen of their number dead and dying on the ground.

They had not counted on the men being ready for them, but thought they would take them completely by surprise and thus kill them all before they had a chance to put up a fight.

But a redskin does not give up very easily, especially when he knows he has the majority on his side.

The red demons knew just about how many they had to fight, and outnumbering them almost four to one, they felt that victory must certainly be theirs in the end.

They drew back to a safe distance and tried to draw the brave defenders out into the open by making them think they were on the run.

But Punch Joline was too old a hand at the business to be caught like that.

"Lay low, boys, an' save your shots," he said. "Don't so much as show yourself, for it is gittin' lighter all the time, an' they might have some straight shots among 'em. I reckon we kin beat 'em out in this game, 'cause after we drop about half of 'em they'll most likely quit."

These words from the old guide made the men very hopeful, and one of the more reckless ones proposed a cheer for their courageous leader.

The cheer was given with a will, and it not only had the effect of helping the feelings of the attacked, but it enraged the Indians so that they fired a volley and let out their fierce warwhoop again.

But they did not show themselves, so the shots were not answered.

None of the shots took effect, save to riddle the covered wagons, so the besieged party began to get rather jubilant.

It would soon be light enough for them to see plainly, and then the guide thought they would have a better chance to do the fiends some damage.

The Indians must have thought the same way, for suddenly they arose from the grass and charged upon the camp, yelling and shooting as they came.

Two of the whites fell under the fire, which was a proof that the increasing light was beneficial to the attacking party, too.

"Give it to 'em, boys!" shouted the old guide.

"Don't miss a shot," added Hustling Hal, who was firing as fast as he could shove the shells into his rather old-fashioned breech-loading carbine.

But though the Indians fell on every hand, they came straight on.

They got right up close to the wagons and had the camp surrounded in short order.

Suddenly one of the covered wagons burst into flames.

This did just what the fiends intended it should—it attracted the attention of the whites for an instant.

And in that instant a dozen or more of the copper-skinned villains broke through the cordon and sprang forward to fight the besieged party hand-to-hand.

They were right among the women and children now, and though many of them went down before the sturdy defenders of the camp, they kept on coming.

The smoke was now so thick that Hustling Hal could not see more than a foot ahead of him.

It was unsafe to fire his revolver, for fear of hitting his own friends.

A veritable pandemonium now reigned.

The savage yells of the Sioux warriors, the terrified shrieks of the women and children, and the cracking of the rifles and revolvers commingled in a wild, discordant way.

"Keep at 'em, boys! Keep at 'em!"

This was the cry of Punch Joline, and a moment later, when the smoke cleared, they made a rush that caused the Indians to retreat.

CHAPTER III.

THE MARCH TO THE SIOUX VILLAGE.

If Young Wild West had not been in the clutches of the Indians so many times before he might have been very much worried over the capture of himself and friends.

As it was, he took things with a degree of remarkable coolness.

And so it was with Cheyenne Charlie, Jim Dart and Jack Robedee.

They had been in just as bad positions before, and had always managed to come out alive.

But with Wal Wisp it was different.

Though he had been reared in the West, he had never before been in the clutches of hostile redmen, and he thought certain that his time had come.

What little nerve he had possessed had been taken from him by the bullet he had received in his arm, and he was now almost ready to collapse.

Noting this, the chief of the band drew his knife and made a move as though he was going to plunge it into Wisp's body.

A yell of terror came from the captive's lips, and then with a look of disgust Cheyenne Charlie exclaimed:

"Shut up, you fool! You act worse than a baby!"

"That's right, Mr. Wisp," spoke up Wild. "There is no use in acting in that way. The worse they can do is to kill us, and we have all got to die some time, anyway."

"Ugh!" grunted the chief, looking at Wild in surprise. "Paleface boy talk much."

"That's right, chief. I always say what I think," was the retort.

"You no afraid to die, then?"

"No."

"Heap much fool. Crooked Foot take you to his village and make you cry like little child; then he let the squaws and papooses play with you, and then burn at stake. The paleface boy is a fool!"

"Crooked Foot don't know what he is talking about. He would be afraid to meet me in a fair fight. I would make him get on his knees and beg for his life."

Young Wild West knew that this would not anger the chief sufficiently to make him kill them.

It would make him feel more inclined than ever to take them to his village and torture them.

An Indian likes to torture a brave white man.

If he catches a coward he generally kills him right away, knowing that he would faint when the torture began, and thus spoil the fun.

Crooked Foot looked keenly at the five when Wild talked so boldly to him.

He saw naught but defiance in the face of four of them, and even Wal Wisp was trying to profit by what Wild and Charlie had said to him, and was trying to appear quite indifferent.

The first thing the redskins had done after capturing our friends was to rush for the dinner they had cooked and eat it up.

The chief had been one of these, and he had just swallowed a portion of the bear steak, when he began to talk to them.

Wild was now remarkably cool.

He looked around at the rapidly gathering Sioux and saw that there was fully a hundred of them, if not more.

And among them were not more than ten who had horses.

No wonder they had been so anxious to get the horses belonging to the five.

But they only got four of them, as Spitfire had neatly eluded them.

Where the sorrel was now our hero did not know.

But he did not worry about him.

The animal was greatly devoted to his master, and would not go far.

And his remarkable intelligence would keep him out of the way of the redskins.

After Crooked Foot had taken a good look at his captives he turned to the horses that had been seized by his braves.

He examined them all carefully, and then picked out the one belonging to Cheyenne Charlie.

"Ugh!" he exclaimed; "dat fine horse, but not so fine as red horse what get away. Crooked Foot take him."

"An' I hope he throws you an' makes you break your neck!" said the scout, who was nettled about some one else taking charge of his horse.

"Crooked Foot ride any horse; he ride wild horse," was the proud retort.

Then he mounted with no little grace and caused the horse to jump and prance around before the captives, handling him with the greatest of skill.

"There's no danger of him gittin' throwed, I reckon," spoke Robedee. "An' Iujin was born to ride horseback, anyhow."

After going through a few fancy maneuvers the chief galloped up and through the ranks of his braves and told them to get ready to march for the village, which was about ten miles to the south.

He next ordered two long poles to be cut, which was done in short order.

When they were brought to him, he ordered the prisoners to be stood up in single file at a distance of four feet apart.

The things that had been tied about their ankles were severed, and then they got up of their own accord.

The poles were then placed on either side of them by the Indians and tied to them by means of winding buckskin thongs about their waists.

When this had been done Crooked Foot rode up, and surveying the prisoners and the poles they were fastened to, shook his head.

But a moment later his ugly, painted face lighted up.

"Make paleface carry meat," he said. "Cut hands loose, so they can take hold of poles. They no run away."

This was soon done, and the poles were lowered down to the length of their arms.

"Take hold," said Young Wild West to his friends. "They have got it all their own way now, and there is no use in going against them. They are going to make beasts of burden out of us now."

This was true enough.

Two braves soon appeared from behind the rocks, dragging the carcass of a cinnamon bear, and then others appeared with blankets and other trappings belonging to them.

These were piled on the poles between the captives and then the chief gave the order to start.

Wal Wisp was ahead, Jim Dart came next, with Charlie close behind him, while Robedee and Wild brought up the rear.

The load on the poles was a heavy one, but they were forced to bear it.

If they had complained they would have been prodded with sharp sticks and jeered at by the merciless fiends.

"This kind of exercise may do us good," observed Robedee, trying to make light of their situation.

"Well, we will have to make the best of it," Jim replied.

"Palefaces shut up! Heap too much talk!" cried one of the braves, who had evidently been placed in charge of them.

The wearisome march was now on, and with the greasy Sioux warriors all around them, our friends were forced to do one of the most unpleasant and laborious tasks of their whole lives.

For an hour they walked straight ahead toward the south, without once coming to a halt.

Then, after a short rest, a river was forded and the journey continued.

Our friends were now nearly exhausted; in fact Wal Wisp was staggering at intervals of every few minutes.

Then another halt was called, and the five captives dropped to their knees.

That was the only way they could rest.

But even that was a great relief, and after a respite of ten minutes they were prodded till they got up again and once more they started ahead.

The chief and the other three Indians who had possessed themselves of the horses were in high feather.

They rode about in glee, sometimes circling around the marching band.

Every time they passed their captives they would jeer at them.

But under the advice of Wild the five remained oblivious to the insults.

Twenty minutes after the second stop, the village of the Sioux band came in sight.

It was located at the foot of a steep hill on the bank of a shallow stream.

The broad expanse of prairie had been left behind and they were now among the foothills below the range to the westward of Buffalo Gap.

Though Wild West had not been in that vicinity in a long time, he knew that there was a trail leading to Spondulicks somewhere within a dozen miles of the place, and also one that went to Stanton, which was right near the ranch he had purchased of Wal Wisp.

If they could only get free they could start straight for Spondulicks without going back to the trail they had been on when captured.

But to get free! That was the thing!

However, Young Wild West felt that they would, somehow, and that was why he acted so unconcerned about things.

A few minutes later the band of a hundred Sioux marched into the village, which appeared to be a temporary one, or only lately established there, as it was remarkably clean.

There was the usual number of dogs there, though, and the barking of the mongrel canines and the shouting of the squaws and papooses as the prisoners dragged their tired limbs along was almost deafening.

It was a feeling of great relief that came over the prisoners when at last the poles were cut loose from them and their burden allowed to drop to the ground.

Wild was as tired as any of the rest, but unlike them, he did not sink to the ground to get a rest.

He cast a look around to see what the village looked like.

And that very instant there was a commotion among a bunch of redskins off to the left.

Instantly the boy's gaze became riveted in that direction.

Suddenly a low cry of joy went up from his lips.

Dashing straight toward him, knocking the Indians right and left, was his faithful horse Spitfire!

A sudden resolve came into the brave boy's mind.

Both his hands and feet were free of their bonds.

He would make an attempt to escape.

CHAPTER IV.

SOME REMARKABLE MOVES.

On came the sorrel stallion straight toward Young Wild West.

The Indians got back out of the way and allowed him a free passage, for if they had not done so they would have been trampled upon.

The next moment something happened that fairly took the breath away from Cheyenne Charlie and the other captives, and amazed the redskins so that they stood still in their tracks.

With all his strength our hero seized the pommel of the saddle that was still upon Spitfire's back and leaped upward.

Not a word did he say to the horse; it was not necessary.

Without slacking his pace a bit, the intelligent horse bounded away in the same line he had been running.

A feeling of extreme exhilaration shot through the frame of the prince of the saddle as he found himself seated on the back of the steed he called the pride of all horses, and bending his head to the flowing mane, he uttered a shout of defiance.

Then, and not till then, did the Indians make a move to prevent his escape.

But they did not fire on him.

Some were in the act of doing so when Crooked Foot called for them to stop.

"We must take both the horse and rider alive!" he said.

Then Cheyenne Charlie felt his heart leap with joy.

He knew that Wild was free.

There was not a horse in the Indian village that could catch the sorrel.

He thought about something else the next instant.

If Wild was making his escape, why could not the rest of them?

"Let's make a break for it, boys!" he whispered, hurriedly. "Ther reds ain't payin' ther least attention to us now. There's that chief goin' to mount my horse to go after Wild. Now, jest watch me!"

With a single bound the scout was on his feet, and then, before Crooked Foot saw him coming at all, Charlie dealt him a blow between the eyes and felled him to the ground.

As quick as a flash he reached down and possessed himself of the chief's revolver, and then he was into the saddle and off like a shot.

All this happened so quickly that the Indians, who were now pursuing Young Wild West, both mounted and afoot, did not know but that it was Crooked Foot himself on the horse.

Wild was now out of sight of the spot he had started from, having rounded a clump of trees and taken a course toward the northeast.

He had a good lead—one that would surely make his daring attempt to escape a successful one, providing the Indians did not bring him down by a bullet.

And even if they did shoot they would have to do it pretty quickly, or he would be out of range.

Cheyenne Charlie's horse was really the last horse that started, and realizing this, the scout turned off to the left up the hill where the rocks and boulders were thick.

Not a shot was fired at him for the space of ten seconds, and in that time he had accomplished what he wanted to.

He had reached the cover of the rocks, and it would take a remarkable shot to bring him down, since he could only be seen at intervals.

But what about the other three prisoners?

Jim Dart and Jack Robedee were not the ones to remain idle when there was the least show of getting away.

As Charlie darted for his horse Jim exclaimed:

"Come! We must creep away. There is no chance for us to run."

With remarkable quickness he glided toward a clump of bushes the others following him.

Wal Wisp was too nervous and terrified to go very fast, so he brought up the rear.

The three reached the bushes before it was discovered that they were missing.

And then it was that the squaws and papooses made the discovery.

Nearly every brave, buck and old man had joined in the pursuit.

Crooked Foot had struck his head on a stone when Cheyenne Charlie telled him, and he lay there senseless.

Never had there been so much confusion and excitement in the Sioux village.

And the sorrel stallion was responsible for it all.

He had set the ball rolling when he made a dash to reach his brave young master.

Jim Dart's desire to escape was now tenfold.

And so it was with the rest.

But they stood a poor show, for the next instant they were completely surrounded by a horde of squaws and half-grown Indian boys.

"We've got to fight for it!" Jim cried. "Now!"

Leaping to his feet, he began knocking the squaws and boys right and left.

It made no difference to him how hard he hit them.

They were anxious to see him burned at the stake and gloat over his dying wails.

Jack Robedee was a regular human battering-ram when he got going.

He bowled them over like ten-pins.

Jim was leading the way, and finally the two were successful in getting through the crowd.

But Wal Wisp was not so lucky.

He had a flesh wound in the arm, and the pain from it after being compelled to carry the poles so far proved too much for him.

He gave up and sank to the ground in a faint.

The horde pounced upon him like so many demons, and it was wonderful that they did not kill him.

As it was, they mauled and beat him terribly.

But he was unconscious, and did not utter a cry.

It was too bad, but just then Jim and Jack could do nothing for him.

They had more than they could do to take care of themselves.

Seeing that there was no avenue of escape left for them, they made a dive for the largest tepee in the village, which was that of Crooked Foot, the chief.

They broke into it in search of weapons with which to defend themselves just as Crooked Foot staggered to his feet.

The red fiend was badly muddled from the effects of the blow on the back of his head, but he caught a glimpse of the whites as they dashed into his tepee.

Our two friends were safe from the others, as no one was allowed to enter the chief's tepee, under any conditions, but himself and his favorite squaw, and she only by his permission.

There were weapons of all sorts in the tepee, and Jim and Jack seized what they wanted without loss of time.

To let the Indians know that they meant business, they fired a couple of shots through the tepee.

Yells of pain resulted, and they knew the bullets had found targets.

"At a slit through the back, Jack," said Jim. "They will be looking for us to come out at the front."

Jack seized a knife and did so in much less time than it takes to record it.

The knife was sharp, and the skin from which the tepee was made cut easily.

As soon as the opening was large enough, Jack crept forward.

Jim followed him instantly.

The two were discovered the moment they got out, however.

But the squaws and boys were afraid of them now, seeing that they each had a rifle.

The rifles were pretty good ones, too, and were no doubt some of the booty the chief had become possessed of during his raids on the white settlers and wagon trains.

Our two friends were now about as desperate as mortal man could be.

They felt that it was life or death with them.

They kept the crowd covered and began to back away.

Crooked Foot was nowhere to be seen now, and it is quite likely that they would have succeeded in getting away if it had not been for the fact that some of those who had gone on foot in the pursuit returned just then.

The shots they had fired when inside the tepee had brought the braves back.

"If we are goin' under, let's do what we kin before we go!" cried Jack, with a very white face.

Jim nodded, and then they began shooting as fast as they could.

But there were only five shots in each of the rifles, and when eight of the demons had been laid low the plucky pair were pounced upon and captured.

Both had received slight flesh wounds in the sharp encounter, but otherwise they remained unhurt.

They had made a mighty effort to escape, but had failed.

But Wild and Charlie had not been recaptured yet.

Jim and Jack were very roughly treated by the squaws and Indian boys.

They were cuffed and kicked and jabbed at with sharp sticks until they were almost wild.

But never once did they cry out.

After a while they were tied up tightly with thongs and dragged to the spot where Wal Wisp was bound to a tree.

There were other trees close by, and they were placed in similar positions.

Then they were left alone to their own thoughts.

Half an hour passed.

Those of the redskins who had started in pursuit of Wild on foot had all returned now.

About fifteen of them were mounted, and they were out yet.

When half an hour had slipped by these began gradually returning.

Jim and Jack soon noticed their horses among them.

This made them feel a little more sore.

But they did not give up, as they were almost certain now that both Wild and Charlie had got away.

And that being the case, they would surely devise some means of rescuing them.

The bump Crooked Foot had received on his head must have been the means of laying him up for repairs a while, for he did not show up until a few minutes before sunset.

Then he walked over to the three captives and, with a scowling face, said:

"Ugh! Palefaces must die in two hours! Squaws and bucks have fun with them first."

That made our friends feel uneasy, for they knew they were to be tortured.

CHAPTER V.

THE ESCAPE OF WILD AND CHARLIE.

Young Wild West knew it was a case of "do or die" when he got upon the back of Spitfire.

But when he found the redskins did not fire at him, he felt certain of escape.

On dashed the noble horse, and soon the Indian village was left behind.

"I hate to leave the rest of them there, but what can I do now?" thought Wild. "As soon as I elude the Indians I will come to a halt and devise some means of rescuing them."

At the expiration of five minutes he could no longer hear his pursuers.

He got a good start on them, and his horse being far swifter than the ones they had, he had no difficulty in out-distancing them.

"Spitfire, my sorrel beauty," he exclaimed, stroking the animal's glossy neck, "you have saved my life again. I don't know how it was that you came dashing into the village of the Indians just then, but I do know that you could not have come in a better time. The red fiends had just cut us loose from

the poles we had been carrying, and they seemed to forget that our hands were free. Oh, my beauty! we will soon take a rest, for secure hiding-places are showing up as we near the rough ascent of the mountain."

The stallion had been running at the top of his speed from the start, and he even tried to do better when he felt the touch of his master.

Young Wild West understood why the Sioux had not fired on him.

The chief, Crooked Foot, wanted the noble steed, and he was afraid the animal might be injured if the warriors tried to drop the rider from the saddle.

Our hero realized that the horse had been doubly instrumental in saving him.

The way was becoming rougher as he proceeded, and he was forced to slacken his pace at the end of ten minutes.

As Wild looked around he saw a high elevation off to the right which was well covered with stunted pines.

It occurred to him that this would be a good place for him to make for and come to a halt, as he would then be able to see at least a mile in the direction of the Indian village, and he would know when to mount and ride away again.

He turned Spitfire's head that way, and in a couple of minutes he reached the place he figured on as being a good one to watch the Indians from.

Dismounting, Wild patted his horse affectionately, and then tying him well into a grove of the stunted pines, so he could not be seen, he singled out a tree that stood higher than the rest and climbed it.

When near the top he paused and took a survey of the country below him.

Presently a smile broke over the boy's face.

He saw the mounted Indians who had been pursuing him ride right on to the left.

"I must have covered my trail unconsciously," he thought.

But then he remembered that the ground was hard and stony at the point he turned off the trail, which showed little signs of being used, and went right on to the left.

Young Wild West remained up the tree for several minutes.

Then he saw the Sioux riders coming back.

They had lost the trail.

The thing was now whether they would discover where he left it.

Wild hoped they would not.

If they did he would have to mount and ride on.

From his position he could see every movement they made.

The Indians were riding slowly and bending to the ground as they came along.

They were the sharpest people on earth at discovering traces of those they were hunting for.

But our hero felt that he had fooled them, and in a very short time he would know whether he had or not.

When they got pretty close to the place where the young prince of the saddle had turned to climb the hill, one of the Indians dismounted.

Wild now felt that in all probability they would discover the prints of his horse's hoofs and thus strike his trail.

But in less than half a minute later a sigh of relief escaped his lips.

The Sioux riders seemed to be greatly puzzled, and after a short consultation they rode on back to the village.

"Whew!" exclaimed the boy, as he descended the tree. "That was a close shave. I had no idea that I was covering my tracks so well when I turned off to come up here. Luck is with me, I guess. I must now figure on a way to rescue Jim and the rest."

He had just reached the ground when he heard the unmistakable sounds of a horse's hoofs.

"Ah!" exclaimed Wild, under his breath. "Another redskin coming from another direction, eh? Well, as there only appears to be one, I'll wait for him. I haven't a weapon of any kind, but I may be able to get hold of some by waiting for him."

The hoof-beats were coming nearer and nearer all the time, and looking around our hero saw a stick about four feet long lying near him.

He picked it up and found it would make an excellent club.

Instantly his mind was made up.

He would wait for the Indian to come along, and then try and knock him from the saddle with the club.

If he made a miss of it things would be bad for him, but no such a thought as missing came into his head.

He was confident that if he got the chance to strike a blow with the club he would bring his man down.

Making sure that Spitfire was well out of view from the only place the rider could pass, our hero crept forward and crouched behind a tree.

Whoever it was coming was now pretty close, and in a few seconds more he would be there.

Wild clutched his club tightly and nerved himself to strike.

The next moment a horse's head appeared and then the rider came into view.

Young Wild West dropped the club and an exclamation of joy came from his lips.

The approaching horseman was Cheyenne Charlie!

He did not stop to wonder how the scout had made his escape, but dashed right out in front of his horse.

Charlie was not riding very fast just then and, recognizing Wild, he reined in his steed instantly.

"How did you get away?" asked our hero, his countenance beaming with joy.

"I knocked the chief down just as he was goin' to git on my horse to chase you," was the reply. "I thought I had better light out, too, so I took a different direction, an' not one of 'em followed me. I've got a shooter, too."

"Good! Now we must find a way to get the rest out of the clutches of the redskins. You are sure that none of them followed you?"

"Oh, yes! They all put after you—every man jack of 'em. I noticed that Jim, Jack an' Wisp lit out afoot ther same time that I did. You see, I seen old Crooked Foot goin' to mount my horse to go after you, an' it struck me that I had better ride ther critter myself, so I give it to him good an' grabbed his revolver."

"We have done much better than I expected, though I feel very anxious about the rest. The red fiends may take it in their heads to kill them right away, just for satisfaction."

"Well, let's go back an' save 'em."

"That is what we will have to do."

"Ther chances are that Crooked Foot will keep 'em till dark an' then burn 'em at ther stake. Right after sunset is generally ther time when they do such things, you know."

"Yes. Well, we have a good job ahead of us. Sunset is not very far off. We have got to do a whole lot inside of two hours."

"We have got to save our partners, and Wal Wisp, too."

"We have, Charlie; and we will!"

"An' it will have to be you who will find ther way to do it."

"I am doing my best to think now."

At this the scout remained silent.

He did not wait to continue the conversation just then, as he was afraid he might bother Wild in figuring out what would be the best thing for them to do.

In less than half a minute our hero turned to the scout and observed:

"We will ride back in the direction of the village at once. Perhaps we will find a way to rescue them when we get there."

"All right," was the reply. And then Young Wild West mounted Spitfire, and the two rode off in the direction Charlie had come.

"You are certain that none of the Indians followed you?" the boy queried.

"Sure of it, unless they was on foot. I know for certain that every horse they had in ther place went after you. They had all started when Crooked Foot tried to mount mine."

"Well, we must go slow and be on the lookout, anyhow. If we hear any one coming, we must hide and wait for them, the same as I was waiting for you."

"That's right. I hope we do hear some one comin', an' it turns out to be ther ones we left behind in our sudden rush to freedom."

"So do I."

The two had made perhaps a couple of hundred yards, when all of a sudden they rounded a slight bend and came face to face with two Indians.

The fact that our two friends were riding over a sandy stretch at the time made it sound to them as though the approaching horses were farther away than they were.

Wild and Charlie saw the Indians before they were seen themselves.

Wild still had the club, and as quick as a flash he placed it to his shoulder and exclaimed:

"Hold up your hands, you red fiends! And don't you dare to open your mouths!"

The scout had them covered with the revolver he had taken from the chief.

It was a brilliant move on the part of Young Wild West, and the best part of it was that it was entirely successful.

The two Sioux raised their hands instantly, remaining in a crouching position on the ground.

"Peace on them—quick!" cried our hero, who did not want to give them an opportunity to discover that it was not a rifle he had leveled at them.

Charlie understood, and like a catapult he shot from the saddle, followed by Wild.

The two landed on the ground within a few feet of the crouching Indians, and as one of them made a move to utter his war-whoop and show fight, down came the club in the hands of our hero.

It struck the brave on the top of the head squarely, and he rolled over like a log.

The other did not offer any resistance, and Cheyenne Charlie simply took his weapons from him and cautioned him to remain perfectly quiet on pain of instant death.

"I guess we are in pretty good luck," observed Wild, as he proceeded to relieve the Indian he had felled with the club of his revolver and hunting knife.

"I should reckon so," returned the scout, with a grin. "What are we goin' to do with 'em, Wild?"

"I don't think we will have any trouble with this one," and the boy pointed to the victim of the blow from the club. "I hit him harder than I thought, it seems. His skull is crushed in from the blow."

This was indeed the case.

Young Wild West was a powerful fellow, anyway, and when he struck the blow that felled the Indian he had put his whole force in it.

The redskin was stone dead.

"It would be a good idea to fix this one ther same way, but as he didn't show fight, I can't do it."

"Certainly not. We will tie him up, so he won't be able to get away without us letting him."

"Then what will we do?" asked Charlie.

"We will rig ourselves up to look as much like them as possible, and then go to the edge of the village and wait for a chance to set our friends free."

"That's it!"

"Just help me drag the body in the bushes here, so we won't be apt to be interrupted."

"We had better tie this fellow first."

"To be sure. I had forgotten that."

It did not take them long to bind and gag the redskin.

Though he had shown no resistance, he was not what might be called a coward, since he did not once make an appeal for his life to be spared.

He did not say a word, either in his own tongue or broken English.

As one of the braves had brought a lariat with him, there was little trouble in making a quick and sure job of the tying process, and as soon as it was done they dragged him back into the bushes a few yards and bound him to a tree.

Then they came back and dragged his dead comrade in.

The weapons and ammunition they took from the two were sufficient to make them feel good.

They would now be able to put up a fight against any one who opposed them.

With the sharp hunting knife he took from the dead Indian, Young Wild West proceeded to cut off the long raven hair.

It was rather a gruesome task, but he felt it must be done in order to carry out the plan he had in his head.

When the job was accomplished he wiped the blood from the hair and crumpled feathers.

"Get at work and make some sort of a wig out of this," he observed, handing it over to Cheyenne Charlie.

Then he went to the prisoner, and in spite of the resentment he showed at the treatment, the boy soon removed his hair also.

He went right at work then, for he always carried cord in his pocket, as did his partners.

In less than fifteen minutes our two friends had manufactured a couple of wigs that looked in the gloom like the real thing, and a little later, when they put them on, after first smearing their faces with some colored clay they found handy by, they looked like a pair of Sioux warriors.

The two Indians had worn army coats which they had stripped from their victims at some time or other and, as dirty as the garments were, our two friends put them on.

Then their disguise was complete.

"Now we will go down to the village and see what is going on," said Wild.

"Good enough," was the retort, and the scout could not help grinning as he looked at his partner. "You look worse

than I ever seen you look before, Wild, 'cause you look jest like an Injun brave."

"That is just what I want to look like for a while," was the reply. "Your disguise is certainly a good one. Now let us mount and ride along slowly till we get to within a quarter of a mile from the place where the prisoners are; then we will dismount, tie our horses in a safe place and go to the rescue."

"All right. It won't be so very long now before ther sun goes down. We want to get there, so's we kin see what's goin' on before it does go down. I'll bet that they are alive, an' that ther Sioux are waitin' till dark to put 'em through a course of sprouts before they kill 'em."

"I hope you are right. If you are we will get them away, I am sure."

"So am I."

The two now allowed their horses to walk along with as little noise as possible.

In a litle while they reached a point on the hill Charlie had ascended in making his escape, where they could look at the village.

CHAPTER VI.

WILD'S SCHEME IS SUCCESSFUL.

Jim Dart was beginning to get very uneasy when he saw the sun getting to the line where it would disappear in the west.

He noticed that the Indians were making preparations for what they considered a great entertainment.

Three posts had been driven in the ground not far from where the prisoners were, and the squaws and children of the red men were engaged in carrying brush and dry wood to them.

It did not take Jim a second to divine what this mean. They were to be burned at the stake.

And the Indians meant to put them through a terrible torture before that took place.

Jack Robedee sat with his back against the tree to which he was bound and looked on in dogged silence.

Wal Wisp was on the verge of a collapse, and it was more than evident that he would give up when the torture began.

The three were close enough to talk in whispers, and after a lengthy silence Jim said:

"Things are getting mighty desperate, I must say. I wonder how Wild and Charlie made out? All the Indians who gave pursuit on horseback have returned, and that must mean that they got away."

"They'll show up on time—see if they don't," answered Jack, in a hopeful tone.

At this the face of Wisp brightened just the least bit.

"Do you think so?" he asked.

"I certainly do," was Robedee's retort. "I won't give up thinkin' so until I feel myself goin' under."

"The same here," and Jim looked as though he meant it.

While they were talking, who should come up but the chief. He was smiling as much as an Indian can smile, showing how he enjoyed seeing the three whites tied to the trees, waiting to be killed by slow torture.

"Ugh!" he grunted. "How palefaces feel?"

"Pretty good," answered Jim. "How do you feel?"

"Crooked Foot feel good; not like palefaces, who must make fun pretty soon and then die at the stake."

"Well, if you do burn us, you will only have three, as the other two got away from you."

"They get away, but we catch soon. If we no catch to-night, we catch to-morrow. Crooked Foot heap much brave; he no let palefaces go very far."

"Crooked Foot may be a great brave, but Young Wild West will show him something that he never knew before inside of an hour," spoke up Jim.

"Who Young Wiid West?" demanded the chief, showing just the least bit of interest.

"Never mind; you will find out soon enough."

"Ugh! Me catch Young Wild West and burn at the stake, too."

"Oh, I guess you won't do that."

"Say, if you'll let me go I'll give you a thousand dollars jest as soon as I kin git to Weston," said Wal Wisp, suddenly.

The chief laughed at this.

"You no got thousand dollars," he retorted. "You heap big coward; you die first to make squaws and papooses laugh."

The rancher was just about to tell him that he had over a thousand dollars stowed away inside his shoes, but a warning look from Jim checked him.

Wild had converted what money he had into banknotes, and he had passed it between his feet and the soles of his shoes before they started from Roaring Ranch to go to Weston.

And if Jim had not stopped him just then he would have let the Indian chief know all about it.

If he had had a million there that would not have been sufficient to save his life.

Crooked Foot would have taken it, and then the rancher would have suffered death just the same.

The chief looked at the three in silence for a while, and then, as he turned to go, remarked:

"Two palefaces heap much brave; other one coward."

"You know who he thinks the coward is, don't you?" asked Robedee, turning to the rancher. "I'd spunk up, if I was you, an' not let him call you a coward. That's about the worst thing a man can be called, in my way of thinkin'. A man can't die but once, an' if he has got to go while a lot of red heathens is hollerin' an' laughin' themselves hoarse at him, I say that a feller ought to jest grit hard on his teeth an' not give 'em ther satisfaction of listenin' to him beg or cry with pain. Wal Wisp, if they do make us step off ther earth, yer jest listen to me, an' if you hear me beg or cry out to 'em to let up, I'll stand treat to ther best bottle of wine I kin buy in ther first town we strike after we git out of this scrape."

As Jack said this he spoke very earnestly, and he did not realize that his words were in the form of a ghastly joke, more than anything else, till he saw a faint smile flit over the countenance of Jim Dart.

"You talk jest as if we was goin' to git out of this alive," observed Wal Wisp. "How are yer goin' to git to a place where they sell wine if you git burned up by these Injuns?"

Jack made no reply.

He was unable to answer such a question, so he looked the other way and did a lot of thinking.

Jim thought it best not to have anything to say about Jack's remark, so he changed the subject.

"It is beginning to git dark," he said. "In my opinion something is going to happen pretty soon that will be a big surprise to the Sioux."

"An' mebbe it will be a big surprise to us," ventured Wal Wisp, who had plucked up a little courage after what Jack had said to him.

"No; it will not be much of a surprise to me. I have been in such fixes as this before, and I have been got out of them by the same person I feel sure is goin' to get us out of it this time. I mean Young Wild West."

"I hope he does."

"You jest wait!" exclaimed Robedee.

"Ugh!"

This came from an Indian who had crawled up to them unobserved.

Jim craned his neck as much as he could and saw the painted features of the new arrival right squarely in front of his eyes.

He looked puzzled for an instant, and then a joyous look crossed his face.

It was not a Sioux who had uttered the guttural exclamation; it was Young Wild West!

Dart had no difficulty in recognizing him, in spite of the headgear and paint.

"Don't show any surprise," came in a whisper from our hero. "Charlie and I are both here. I just came up with an armful of brush to add to the pile that is to burn you fellows up. I am going to lay right here under this pile, and as soon as it gets a little darker I will cut you all loose. Mr. Wisp, I want you to keep perfectly cool, now, and don't act at all as though you expected to get free, or the redskins will be suspicious that something is wrong. Understand me, now. If you don't do as I say I shan't make a move to save you, but will simply look after my partners."

"I'll do as yer say," retorted Wisp, doing his best to retain his composure.

Young Wild West said no more, but quickly drew back under the pile of brush.

No one but he could have practised such deception upon the Indians.

But he was a wonder in that sort of business.

Cheyenne Charlie was not over forty feet away, snugly ensconced in the branches of a thick-limbed fir tree, and their horses were on the hillside less than two hundred yards distant.

The scheme to rescue their friends was a daring, not to say desperate, one.

And all signs pointed out to it being carried through successfully.

It was now getting darker, and in a few minutes the redskins would be ready to go ahead with their banding work.

Young Wild West would have to act pretty quickly.

Jim and Jack were now resting comparatively easy.

Just how they could get away they did not know; nor did they care just then.

They felt certain that they were going to get away, though, and that was sufficient.

Up in the fir tree, Cheyenne Charlie was holding what seemed to be a wet clay ball in his hand.

The ball was made of what it appeared to be, only it was filled with powder that had been carefully wrapped in dry leaves first, and had a rudely made fuse running through the clay.

Just as it got dark Crooked Foot started for the captives, followed by the braves who were highest in authority under him.

Charlie saw this move from the tree, and the next moment he struck a match and applied it to the fuse.

Then with all his might he hurled the ball of clay high over the heads of the captives and squarely among a dozen or more of the Indians grouped together.

The instant it struck there was a brilliant flash, followed by an explosion similar to that of a cannon being discharged with no wad upon the powder.

The Indians scattered in every direction and the greatest confusion prevailed.

Young Wild West slid from beneath the brushwood and with two quick slashes of his knife Jim Dart was free.

Then a knife was slipped into his hand, and knowing just what was required of him, Jim crawled over to Wal Wisp and cut him loose.

By this time Wild had attended to Robedee, and then in a whisper he told them to follow him.

It had only taken a bare two seconds to accomplish all this.

Luck was with our friends, it seemed, for the smoke from the explosive ball fired by the scout hung over the spot like a pall.

Five seconds later the four were at the tree where Cheyenne Charlie awaited them.

"Go right up ther hill," he said to them, "an' keep right on runnin'. Wild an' me has got to git three horses somehow."

At this Wal Wisp darted off at the top of his speed, leaving the others far behind.

Charlie now followed Wild direct to the village.

They hoped their disguise would allow them to accomplish what they desired.

That was to get the horses that belonged to their party and the rest that were in the village as well.

That would insure their escape, as the Indians would not be able to follow them.

Like shadows the two daring fellows made their way into the village.

They were acting quickly, knowing full well that it was policy to "strike while the iron was hot."

Charlie had another explosive ball in his hand, ready to set it off at any moment.

In the darkness they would not be apt to be recognized.

Both knew exactly where the horses were; they had located them and got as near to them as they dared before beginning operations.

When they were in the village they did not hesitate to mingle with the surprised Indians, some of whom were hastening for the horses, having just become aware of the fact that the captives had escaped.

The two daring scouts hastened for the horses along with the rest.

As they neared them Wild and Charlie darted ahead.

They cut the halters as fast as they could the moment they reached the animals, retaining a hold upon each of them.

Then they sprang upon the backs of a couple of them. Half a dozen Indians were about to mount also when Charlie lighted the improvised bomb and threw it back behind the horses.

It went off before it touched the ground, and the frightened animals plunged forward, just as they wanted them to do.

Away sped the whole bunch of them, our friends guiding them as masterfully as though they were simply performing a feat for the pleasure of the crowd.

Their daring scheme had worked to perfection. For before the Sioux had recovered from the second explosion they were outside the limits of the village.

Up the hill they dashed, and just as they were passing the point where they had left their own horses two of the captured steeds broke away from them.

"Let them go!" cried Wild. "We have no time to stop to catch them now."

Jim and Jack were waiting for them, but Wal Wisp was nowhere to be seen.

They did not have to be told to mount, but got on the backs of the first two horses their hands touched.

Wild rode up to the tree where his sorrel was tied and quickly severed the rope he was tethered with.

But he did not bother to change his mount just then.

"Come on!" he exclaimed, and leading the way, he set out at a breakneck pace.

The others followed close enough, Cheyenne Charlie having cut his horse loose and who was bringing up the rear leading four of the captured ones.

Pierce yells of rage and excitement came from the Indians they had so neatly tricked, and Young Wild West laughed when he heard them.

"Well away, you fiends!" he thought. "You have had your turn to-day; now we are having ours."

Half a minute later they overtook Wal Wisp, who had been fleeing so fast that he was almost breathless.

They paused long enough to get him on one of the horses, and then they moved ahead again.

They took what Wild deemed to be the best route, and soon the yells and shouts of the Indians began to gradually grow less distinct.

"I guess we can make the change to our own horses now," observed our hero, as he slowed down. "I always feel more comfortable when I am riding Spitfire. This beast is a bit slow, anyway."

"The same here," said Charlie. So they came to a halt and soon made the change.

Then they started ahead again and kept on riding till pretty close to midnight.

A fine camping place had been reached by this time, so they dismounted on the advice of Wild.

"We haven't very much in the way of weapons," the young fellow remarked, "but I guess we could put up a pretty stiff fight if any of our foes should follow us and come upon us. I hardly think any of them will get here much before morning, though, even if they have followed our trail."

"You are right on that," retorted Jim. "We brought all their horses but two, so the rest would be a long while in getting to us on foot."

After a short consultation it was decided to turn the horses loose they had no use for, so they accordingly did so.

Their experience in the last twelve hours had been a rather thrilling one, and now, as tired as they were, they felt jubilant at the way it had turned out.

"I wouldn't have believed that I would be here," said Wal Wisp, who was now as chipper as a bird. "I made up my mind that I was a goner when ther redskins first got hold of us at noon to-day. If it wasn't for my wounded arm I'd git up an' dance a jig."

"I guess that wound ain't anything much," spoke up Robedee. "I noticed you used your arm pretty lively when you ran away from us to-night. Let me see ther hurt; maybe I kin do somethin' for it."

Wisp rolled up his sleeve, and after Jack took a good look at it he searched around and found some green leaves, which he chewed into a pulp and placed upon the wound.

He then tied it up and told the man not to allow his arm to hang down for a few hours.

"You'll be all right in ther mornin'," he added. "I know what them leaves are. They are what ther Injuns use, an' they'll cure a flesh wound quicker than lightnin'."

Our five friends were pretty well tired out, as they had eaten nothing since mornin'; but there was nothing left for them to do but to go till daylight.

Jim's saddle-bags had contained some coffee, salt, sugar and a few hard government biscuits, but when they took possession of his horse the Indians had emptied them.

"Ther only thing for us to do is to buckle our belts tighter, an' imagine that we've jest been feedin' on juicy steaks from a young grizzly," observed Cheyenne Charlie, as he set the example and drew up his belt a couple of holes.

"That's about ther size of it," chimed in Jack, with a grin. "How would you like to have a turkey sandwich, Mr. Wisp?"

"Keep still," exclaimed the rancher. "What's ther use of talkin' about grub when yer ain't got any? I could eat a piece of raw pork just now, let alone turkey."

They kept the thing going quite a little while longer, and at last Wal Wisp crawled up against a tree and went to sleep.

It was then decided that Wild and Jack would stand guard

for the first two hours, and then Jim and Charlie would do duty for the next two.

By that time it would be daylight, and then the first thing they would do would be to look for something to eat. The balance of the night passed slowly enough to the hungry five.

But no Indians showed up, and that was a consolation.

It must have been that the red fiends had failed to trail them in the darkness, for they certainly would try to follow and recapture them.

As the first gray streaks showed in the east Young Wild West awoke those who were asleep.

Just as they were aroused the sound of firing came to their ears from the south.

Instantly the little camp was aroused to action.

The first thought that entered Young Wild West's mind was that the Sioux had been hunting for them and had come across another party of whites.

His nature told him to fly to the helpless, and forgetting all about the gnawings of hunger, he cried out to his companions:

"Hurry, boys; we must see what that shooting means."

Wal Wisp alone seemed rather opposed to this action.

"We are out of trouble now, an' we might git in more," he said.

"You kin stay here if yer want to," retorted Robedee, with something like a sneer.

That settled it. Wisp said no more, but hurried to get his horse ready.

There were only two rifles, three revolvers and two hunting knives among our friends, so Wild divided them up as he thought best.

He kept a rifle and a revolver for himself, gave Cheyenne Charlie the other rifle and one of the revolvers, Jim another, and Jack and Wisp each a knife.

"Now, come on!" he cried, leaping into the saddle. "As soon as this trouble is settled we will have breakfast."

"Mebbe we will," answered Wisp, "an' mebbe we'll fall into ther clutches of ther redskins ag'in."

No one paid the least attention to what he said, but started in the direction the firing came from.

The shooting was now fast and furious, and it was evident that a hot fight was in progress.

"It must be nearly a mile distant, too," Wild figured, and he let Spitfire go at the top of his speed.

It was getting lighter all the time, and when he had been riding about two minutes he looked around and found that he was leaving his companions behind.

There was no horse that he had ever seen that was the match of the sorrel stallion.

Wild slowed down and allowed the others to come up.

They were now close enough to see the smoke of the battle, and the fiendish yells of a horde of redskins rang in their ears.

They could see the shadowy outlines of a clump of trees rearing themselves up above the cloud of smoke, and Wild at once made a curve so he could come up on the flank of the Indians.

He was afraid to begin firing, as it would be impossible to do so without hitting the party on the defensive.

"I want you all to yell as though each one of you was a whole dozen when I give the word," he called out. "Now, let her go!"

It would be hard to find two men who could yell louder than Cheyenne Charlie and Jack Robedee when they had a mind to, and they had the mind on this occasion, and did their level best.

The result was that it really seemed as though there was a score of them.

The next minute they were in a hot fight with a band of retreating Indians that was giving up its attack on the emigrants under the charge of Punch Joline and Hustling Hal.

CHAPTER VII.

YOUNG WILD WEST ON THE TRAIL.

"They are on the run!" cried Hustling Hal, when he noticed that the Indians were retreating. "Give it to them, boys! Don't spare them!"

At that instant a shrill scream rang out that almost froze the blood in the young guide's veins.

It was not that the scream was weird or unnatural, but that he recognized instantly who it came from.

It was the voice of pretty Lena Merrill, his sweetheart, and she was in distress.

"My goodness!" groaned Hustling Hal, great beads of perspiration starting out on his forehead. "The red demons have got the girl!"

He made a dash in the direction the scream had come from, but just then he received a blow on the head from the flat side of a tomahawk and was knocked senseless to the ground.

It must have been ten minutes later when he came to, and when he did so he found the kindly face of Punch Joline bending over him.

The old scout was bleeding from a wound on his cheek, but he did not seem to notice this in the least, so engrossed was he in bringing his young friend back to consciousness.

"Where is she?" cried Hustling Hal, making a vain effort to stagger to his feet.

"Don't worry, Hal. They'll have her soon enough. Don't excite yourself too much. That clip you got on ther side of her head was a bad one, an' it'll take yer some time to git over it. Ther reds have carried Lena off, but they won't git far, 'cause Young Wild West an' a dozen men are hot on ther trail. Young Wild West will save her, 'cause he never makes a miss when he starts ter do a thing. We've whipped 'em all to thunder, an' they are on ther run. You kin hear ther shcotin' off there to ther northwest. That's Young Wild West who jest arrived in time to help us make ther rout complete. Take a drink of this brandy, Hal, an' you'll feel better."

Looking at him wonderingly, the brave young guide let him raise the flask to his lips.

He took a good dose of it, and then tried to raise himself up, but found that his head hurt him so that it was agony to lift it.

"Young Wild West, did you say?" he asked feebly.

"Yes, Hal; you've heard of him lots of times, ain't yer? He's ther boss of ther town they call Weston, an' is what they call ther prince of ther saddle. It was him an' his friends what built ther railroad from Spondulicks to Weston, you know."

"Yes; I know. I have heard a great deal of Young Wild West, and I am glad he has come to help us. But, Punch, do you really think they will save her?"

"Save her? Well, I should reckon so. Don't you worry a bit. They won't hurt a hair of her head. Young Wild West says it is ther same crowd what had him an' his friends prisoners yesterday. He worked a fine scheme, an' they all got away from ther reds. No one else could have worked it, 'tain't likely. You jest lay still a while, now, an' you'll be all right by an' by. There comes ther sun up! It's goin' ter be a fine day, so you mustn't worry."

The young man was really ill from the effects of the blow he had received, so he did remain as quiet as he could under the circumstances.

A few minutes later Dan Merrill, the father of his sweetheart, came up.

The man had just succeeded in quieting his wife, and he felt like talking to some one whom he knew would sympathize with him.

It appears that Lena Merrill had been the only one the Sioux had made a captive of, and they would not have caught her if she had not left her mother to find Hustling Hal, thinking that he would surely be killed in the fight.

Young Wild West and his four companions had dashed to the spot just after the capture was made, and as soon as the young prince of the saddle had learned what had happened he had called for volunteers to follow him in pursuit of the fiends.

Eight of the emigrants had immediately responded to his call, among whom was Joe Merrill, the girl's brother.

These eight, with Cheyenne Charlie, Jim Dart, Jack Robedee and himself, made just an even dozen.

The men of the wagon train had provided our friends with the weapons they were lacking of, and then they had set out on a wild gallop in hot pursuit of the retreating band.

It becomes our duty to follow them, since the emigrant camp was now safe.

Wild did not want the Indians to know that they were being trailed, so as soon as they had fired a couple of volleys at them, he ordered the men to stop.

"If we are going to rescue the girl we must use a little strategy," he said. "It will not do for us to dash among them and try to take their captive from them by force. There are altogether too many of them for that. They are on foot, and we have horses; so let them go, and while they are making for the strip of timber yonder we will try and devise some means of effecting a rescue."

Long Wild and Charlie had discarded the disguises they

had worn the night before, and they now presented their usual appearance.

"Ther varmints are headin' for that strip of timber, sure enough," observed Cheyenne Charlie, who sat on his horse, shading his eyes with his left palm. "They are goin' to stop there an' make a stand for it. I kin see ther gal now. She is on a horse with Crooked Foot, ther chief. They have got eight or ten horses, an' that's all. They must have struck the critters we let go last night, or else another lot of Injuns has come along an' were mounted. Wild, I reckon we'd better head for ther risin' sun an' then work our way around to the timber strip from ther other side. I feel sure that you will find a way to steal ther girl from her captors."

"Of course he will," spoke up Jack.

The eight men who had joined them looked admiringly at our hero.

None of them had ever seen him before, and only one or two had heard of him.

But they could see that he was no ordinary person, by his actions and manner.

They had now turned to the east, as they rode along Robedee happened to mention the fact that the four of them had not tasted food in twenty-four hours.

"Do you mean that?" asked one of the men.

"Yes, it is a fact," replied Jack. "If we only had a little bite of something and a swaller of coffee we would be all right."

"Since you are not going to follow the Indians up and attack them, why not go back to the camp and get something to eat?" suggested the man.

"That would hardly do now," retorted Young Wild West. "The parents of the girl would think that we were not trying very hard to save her. One of you could go back and get something for us, though, and follow us up. We will halt as soon as we get to the other side of the timber strip."

"Well, I'll be ther one to go an' git somethin' to eat, then," and without another word the man turned his horse and galloped back to camp.

When his friends saw him coming they were greatly surprised.

"What's ther matter?" asked Punch Joline. "You ain't give up goin' with Young Wild West, have you?"

"Oh, no," was the reply. "I have come back for some food. Young Wild West and his three partners haven't eaten a thing since breakfast yesterday morning."

"So the feller they left here says. He's over there makin' up for lost time."

Sure enough, Wal Wisp was seated on a log devouring an unlimited supply of bacon, potatoes, buffalo meat and bread.

The man quickly went about the camp and gathered enough cooked victuals to feed a dozen.

The supply was wrapped up and placed in a feed bag, and then with a jug of hot coffee he set out to overtake the hungry four and their companions.

They were now probably three miles distant, but he could travel in a straight line and reach them in a shorter time than by following the trail they had made in pursuing the retreating Indians.

And he would also be able to keep out of sight of the place the Indians had been hurrying for.

The man's name was Jackson, and he was one of the most ambitious of the whole train.

He was single, and hoped to make his fortune in the West. Jackson was pretty well hampered by the bag and jug, but he made pretty good speed for all that.

"I want to learn something of the ways of the West," he muttered as he rode along, "and I guess I am in a first-class way of doing it. Young Wild West, as they call him, seems to be a real Indian fighter, young as he is. His three friends put more confidence in him than I ever saw placed in any man. If he is what they say he is, he must be a wonderful young fellow."

Musing in this strain, and riding as fast as he could, the man soon covered a mile.

He glanced over his shoulder and saw that the clump of trees where the camp of the emigrants was located was still in view, though he could see nothing of those who were in it.

Then he looked over in the direction he had last seen the Indians.

Jackson gave a start then and urged his horse to a faster gait.

Two Indian braves were bearing down upon him, not a quarter of a mile away.

They had evidently been scouting around to watch the camp of the whites, and had seen him come out.

"If I dropped this grub I guess I could get away from them all right," he muttered. "But I won't do that, for the ones it is for are hungry. It may be that Young Wild West or one of his friends will ride back to meet me. I'll stick it out as long as I can, anyhow."

He looked behind him again at the expiration of about a minute, and as he did so one of the pursuing Indians fired a shot at him.

Before the report sounded the jug he had in his hand was shattered by a bullet.

"There goes the coffee!" exclaimed Jackson. "Well, maybe I can put up a faster gait now. Get up, there!"

He could control the horse better now, and off he went at a faster gait, stopping the gain of his pursuers instantly.

Another shot came from the Indians, the bullet whizzing over Jackson's head and causing him to duck involuntarily.

He was unable to turn in the saddle and fire an answering shot, even if he was able to shoot straight enough to hit one of them.

The bag of provisions hindered him from doing anything like that.

The redskins kept silent, which was rather strange.

But they seemed bent on overtaking the paleface they had started after.

Each of them fired again, both shooting high, as it was plain that they did not want to hit the horse.

They wanted all the horses they could get just then.

The race kept on until Jackson had covered another mile.

The two Sioux were now less than a quarter of a mile behind him, and were gaining slightly again.

Suddenly Jackson noticed a horseman sweeping toward him from the right.

At first he thought it was another Indian, but a second glance told him differently.

The horseman was a white, with a wealth of hair streaming over his shoulders.

It was Young Wild West!

Jackson could easily recognize him, even at that distance.

A shout of defiance came from the fleeing man now.

He could not restrain himself, since he felt certain that he was safe.

Suddenly he saw Young Wild West come to a halt and raise his rifle to his shoulder.

"He ain't goin' to shoot at 'em from such a distance as that!" gasped the man. "Why, it must be more than a thousand yards."

But at that moment a whip-like crack rang out, and turning, Jackson saw one of the pursuing Indians throw up his hands and tumble from the saddle.

Before he could get his eye on the prince of the saddle again another report sounded and the other one dropped.

The two riderless horses veered around and went galloping over the back track.

It was the most remarkable shooting Jackson had ever witnessed.

The sorrel stallion and his dashing young rider was now coming to meet him, and with a cheer Jackson raised the bag of provisions so Wild could see what he had.

A minute later the two met.

"You are a wonderful shot, Young Wild West!" cried Jackson. "If I could shoot like you I wouldn't be afraid of all the Indians in the Territories of the United States."

"You will learn how to shoot as well as I if you practise," was the modest reply. "I suppose you have got something to eat in that bag?"

"Yes. It is pretty heavy, too. I had a jug of hot coffee, but one of the Indians shot it out of my hand."

"A close call, I must say. Well, come on! We will reach our friends in about ten minutes. As soon as I found a good temporary headquarters I rode back to meet you, thinking you might get into trouble."

Young Wild West relieved Jackson of the bag, and then at a smart gallop they rode over the prairie.

In a trifle less than five minutes they reached a clump of trees on the bank of a river and came to the camp that Wild had selected temporarily.

The next minute the half-famished four were eating the food Jackson had brought from the emigrant's camp.

The lack of coffee to wash it down made little difference just then.

They were hungry, and copious drinks of water answered the purpose.

"I'm just as good as I ever was in my life!" exclaimed Jackson. "Half an hour after the arrival of the provisions, what is their next move, Wild?"

"We have got to rescue the girl the Sioux stole," was the reply. "We must not let them get back to their village with her, for if we do it will be a difficult task."

"Well, we are now where we kin head 'em off, ain't we?"

"Yes; they were foolish enough to make for the strip of timber over there and give us a chance to head them off. But what they are foolish in doing is all the better for us. They no doubt expected that they would be pursued, and they wanted to get to the timber, so they could fight from behind the trees. Never mind! Crooked Foot will wish he had stayed right in his village before we are through with him. We are on his trail, and if he don't go under before another twenty-four hours roll around, my name is not Young Wild West!"

"That's what I like to hear!" exclaimed young Joe Merrill, brother to the captive maiden. "Three cheers for Young Wild West!"

The cheers were given in a hearty manner, even Wild's partners joining in.

"Do you think the Indians know we are here?" asked Jackson a moment later.

"No," answered Wild; "they don't know it; but they would have known it by this time if I hadn't dropped the two who were chasing you. If they could have got back to Crooked Foot they would have told him about you meeting me and heading this way; then they would have been suspicious. They are keeping a watch in the direction of the wagon train."

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW WILD BROUGHT AN INDIAN TO TERMS.

Crooked Foot, the Sioux chief, had been very persistent in his efforts to recapture the prisoners who had escaped from him.

He had started out with a hundred warriors on foot immediately after they had recovered themselves from the effects of the last explosion Cheyenne Charlie had caused.

The fact of their horses being gone did not deter them in the least.

They kept right on the trail, carrying torchlights to show them the way, and it was not until midnight that they lost the trail, owing to the fact that it went over a tract of hard, flinty ground for over a mile.

But they pressed right on, and about an hour later they came upon half a dozen of their horses, which had been turned loose by our friends.

This encouraged the chief somewhat, and made him more persistent than ever.

He picked out the best horse for himself, and then turned the rest over to his favorites among the braves.

Then he went into camp right there on the prairie, and after they had rested a while he picked out two of those who had been provided with horses and sent them out scouting to find the escaped captives.

These were the two who located the camp of the emigrants, and when they came back and reported Crooked Foot was in high glee. He ordered a march to the vicinity of the camp of the palefaces at once.

When they got as far as they dared to go he halted his band and gave it out that they were to wait till daylight to make the attack.

The two who had discovered the camp were appointed to keep a watch on the same, and it was these Hustling Hal had run across when he took a walk around the camp.

Crooked Foot thought he was going to have an easy thing of it, but he did not, as the reader knows.

He lost several men, and had he not succeeded in an unexpected manner in carrying off the fair white maiden he would have felt that he was badly beaten.

The fact of his having her in his power elated him so that he forgot all else for the time being, and his one desire was to get her to his village.

Expecting that the whites would follow them up, he, as Young Wild West had prophesied, made for the nearest timber, so he would be able to withstand their attack.

If the red fiends had been supplied with horses it would have been different.

They would have made for their village without delay.

Crooked Foot had seen Young Wild West when he swooped down on them as he was riding off with the captive maiden, and he wondered greatly where the young paleface brave who had so neatly outwitted him had got his firearms.

But he did not want to get close to him, and he succeeded in getting out of harm's way before he was seen by the new arrivals.

He knew that they would not be apt to risk a shot at him while he had the helpless girl on the horse with him.

The place he was making for was not in the direction of the Indian village, but he was acquainted with the territory, and he was aware of the fact that the stream which had its head at the village passed close to the timber.

He was a wily redskin, Crooked Foot, and he thought if he could dispatch one of his braves to the village and get a canoe to come down the river he would be able to get the girl to his tepee without the whites knowing it.

While he was making the journey by water his braves could hold off the whites until they got tired of trying to dislodge them from the timber and lose a lot of men.

This was a very nice scheme, and Crooked Foot thought it would certainly work.

He was much relieved when he found that the party of a dozen whites did not follow them far.

The red scoundrel was the first of the band to reach the timber.

He had the helpless form of Lena Merrill on the horse with him, and as the girl was wrapped tightly in a blanket, she could not have made much of a struggle if she had not fainted after giving a scream for help when she was first seized.

The girl did not return to consciousness till the chief dismounted and allowed her to drop gently to the ground.

Then she opened her eyes, and the first thing they rested upon was the ugly painted visage of Crooked Foot.

"Paleface maiden no be afraid," grunted the redskin. "Me no hurt her."

Lena made no reply to this, though a shudder ran through her.

But she was doing her best to be brave, and gradually she nerved herself to speak.

"Let me go back to my people," she cried. "Why did you bring me here? If you have a heart in you, please let me go at once."

"Paleface maiden go back to her people by and by," hed the chief. "She no go now; Crooked Foot no hurt her; he like her, for her eyes are like the sky and her cheeks are like the wild rose that grows on the side of the mountain. Crooked Foot no hurt her!"

A feeling of horror came over Lena which she only shook off by a desperate effort.

"If you do not let me go you will surely be punished," she managed to articulate.

"Me no afraid of paleface men; me kill all who come after you," was the retort.

By this time the rest of the Indians who were mounted came up, and the chief at once ordered them to proceed to the side of the timber next the river and clear a place for a camp.

Then he took the girl by the arm and told her to come on.

Becoming desperate, she broke away from him and started to run away.

But it was a vain attempt, for she was caught by one of the red warriors before she had covered a dozen paces.

Then, in spite of her shrieks and protests, she was dragged along to the spot selected to make their quarters in for the time being.

It was an admirable spot where the Indians camped.

It was in a little hollow that was about on a level with the water in the river, with a rather high bank between it and the stream.

The rest of the hollow was surrounded by a dense growth of willows, and the trees nearest the edge of the bank branched out over the water.

It would take a fierce charge, indeed, to drive the Sioux from this place, and the chief smiled in his grim fashion as he looked around.

On a little elevation near by there was a group of cedars, and Crooked Foot at once ordered some of these to be cut and a bower made for the captive maiden.

He had an idea that he would pacify her some if he fixed a place where she could be away from the eyes of the braves.

Work was soon done, and then Lena was led into the bower by a guard placed over her, who informed her that if she made a move to run away she would be killed.

The next thing the chief did was to pick out a man to send to the village after a canoe, so the captive might be taken there by way of the river.

He selected one of the bravest and most crafty of the band, and he was soon riding away with the speed of the wind, following the river bank closely, so as to keep under the cover of the trees that lined its bank for the most part of the way.

This particular brave was named Dodging Buck, and when he set out on his mission he had not the least idea that he would fail to do as the chief wanted him to do, and thus gain great favor, and possibly be promoted.

But, like his chief, he was not aware that Young Wild West was between the Indian camp and the village—not much more than a mile away, in fact.

Dodging Buck had not fairly got started on his journey when the sharp command to halt rang out from the bushes in front of him.

Then Young Wild West arose before him with leveled rifle.

"Redskin, if you make a move, or open your mouth, I will send you to the happy hunting grounds!" the boy exclaimed.

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian, showing how surprised he was. "Paleface heap big brave. Dodging Buck do as he say."

"Well, I reckon you had better," and the next instant Cheyenne Charlie appeared on the scene and quickly relieved the brave of his weapons.

"Now git down off the horse," said the scout, taking him by the arm.

Down came Dodging Buck as quickly as he could.

He was no longer the brave, crafty Indian bent on pleasing his chief, but a humble prisoner in the hands of the hated palefaces.

Our friends had been keeping a good watch in the direction of the timber strip, and they had seen the Indian coming more than a minute before he got there.

Wild took charge of the horse and Charlie conducted the captive to the camp.

A faint cheer went up from the men as they saw this.

"Tie him to a tree," observed Wild. "We must learn where he was going and what his mission was, even if we have to torture him to learn it. I will show him that I know how to make a redskin tell the truth."

At this juncture Joe Merrill ran up to Dodging Buck.

"What has become of my sister, you copper-faced heathen?"

The Indian made no reply, but kept his eyes fixed on Young Wild West, whom he recognized as the leader of the men.

"Tell me where the white girl is, I say!" cried the boy in a rage. "Tell me, or I will kill you!"

"Wait a while," spoke up Wild. "I will see what I can do with him. Tie him to that tree, Charlie."

The scout was promptly assisted by Jim Dart, and the prisoner was soon bound to a tree in a helpless condition.

"Now, then, are you going to speak the truth and answer our questions?" Wild asked, fixing his gaze on the Indian.

A sullen shake of the head in the negative was the only reply.

"All right. I will give you a taste of the medicine you enjoy so much in dealing out," and stepping back to a distance of about ten paces or the tree, Wild drew his knife from his belt.

Then as quick as a flash he hurled it in what seemed to be a straight line for the prisoner's head.

With a sharp clink the blade embedded itself in the tree less than an inch above his scalp, cutting away a tuft of feather as it struck.

Young Wild West was calmly smiling as he did this, and reaching over, he took Cheyenne Charlie's knife.

With the point of the blade in his fingers, he drew back his hand; then with a quick movement he sent the second knife flying through the air.

This one grazed the redskin's left ear, drawing a tiny drop of blood and stuck in the tree, quivering like a stricken bird.

But our hero was not through yet.

He took Jim Dart's knife next, and then that, too, was hurled at the tree.

It stuck in the tree on the other side of the Indian's head, an inch from his ear.

He was now fixed so he could not move his head from one side to the other without running the risk of cutting himself, but the expression on the redman's face was one of stolid indifference.

"Didn't I hear you call yourself Dodging Buck?" Wild now asked, as he stepped up to his victim.

"Yes, me Dodging Buck," was the reply.

"Well, you see how straight I can throw a knife; are you going to answer my questions?"

"Dodging Buck say, nothing, paleface braves go on and kill him," was the reply.

"My!" exclaimed Jackson to Jim: "the fellow certainly has a lot of nerve."

"That is the way with most of them," was the retort. "But Wild will bring him to terms, see if he don't."

It was plain that the Indian was not afraid to die, for the look in his eyes was wrought but defiance as he looked around at his captors.

"Go on and kill Dodging Buck; he no say nothing," he remarked.

But our hero knew an Indian's weakness.

"Who has got a powder-horn in the party?" he asked as he looked around.

Two of the emigrants had muzzle-loading rifles, and they both stepped forward.

Wild took the old-fashioned cow-horn from one of them, and, removing the stopper in the end, poured out a quantity of powder in the palm of his hand right in front of the captive.

"It is pretty full, I see," he observed. "There must be over half a pound in it. That would be enough to blow half a dozen redskins into eternity. You don't mind if you never see this horn again, do you?"

"No," replied the man who had handed it to him. "I don't care what becomes of it, so long as you can gain your point, and even if you don't, it makes no difference."

"I am glad of that," averred Wild, "for I am going to blow Dodging Buck into forty thousand pieces, unless he tells me what I want to know."

There was just the vestige of a look of uneasiness that crossed the Indian's face at this remark, and though he did not appear to notice it, our hero did, just the same.

Without another word, he proceeded to scrape together some dry leaves, and when he had got enough he placed them in a heap at the captive's feet.

Then he placed the powder-horn on top of the pile and drew a match from his pocket.

In an indifferent way he scratched the match, and as it blazed up he bent over and lighted the leaves within three feet of the powder-horn.

Then he motioned all hands back out of the way, and some of them thinking he really was going to send the captive red-man to a horrible death, actually ran.

"Are you going to tell me what I want to know, Dodging Buck?" Wild asked, looking the Indian straight in the eyes.

The brave shot a glance at the burning leaves, and observing that the blaze was rapidly creeping toward the powder-horn, answered:

"Yes, me tell paleface what he want to know."

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when our hero kicked aside the burning leaves and stamped them out.

"Now, then, tell me where you were going when we caught you a few minutes ago," he resumed.

"Me go home to village," was the rather dogged rejoinder.

"What was you going there for?"

The Indian hesitated.

Wild drew another match from his pocket and was about to light it, when he said:

"Me go to get canoe for Crooked Foot."

"Ah! You are sure you are telling the truth?"

"Yes; me tell paleface the truth."

"You was going to get the canoe and bring it down the river, so Crooked Foot could take the white maiden away and get her to the village without the palefaces knowing it, I suppose?"

There was no answer to this, and then Wild lighted the match and bent over as though he was going to light the leaves again.

"Yes," exclaimed Dodging Buck, who seemed to have an awful horror of being blown into the Happy Hunting Grounds by the horn of powder.

"Ah, that will do, then."

The young prince of the saddle picked up the powder-horn and tossed it to its owner.

Then he took the knives from the tree and, placing his own in his belt, gave Jim and Charlie theirs.

"Now I know their game," he remarked, as he turned to his companion. "Well, I guess we will save the girl, and it won't be so very long before she will be back among her friends. Jim, you just ride over to the wagon train, and be careful that you do not let any of Crooked Foot's band see you when you go. When you get there, just get the train in motion without any delay. Fetch them along so they will pass within half a mile of the timber strip where the Sioux are hiding. We will do the rest."

"All right," exclaimed Jim, without asking a single question.

He was sure that Wild knew just what he was doing, and he understood perfectly what was required of him.

Dodging Buck showed signs of being much relieved when the knives were removed.

But he said nothing to indicate such a feeling.

That was the nature of his race.

Jim at once got ready to go on his mission to the wagon train.

"I guess I will rig up in imitation of Dodging Buck," he said. "Then, if I am seen by any of the Indians, they will not know but that I am he."

"A good idea!" retorted Wild. "You can do that easily enough, since we have the fixings Charlie and I wore last night."

Dart went right at it, and in a few minutes he was rigged out after the fashion of an Indian buck.

Then he mounted the horse the captive had been riding when he was caught, and set out.

"I will change the rig when I get pretty close to the camp," he said.

As soon as Jim was out of sight Joe Merrill came up to Wild and asked him what he was going to do with Dodging Buck.

"We will have to keep him a prisoner," was the reply.

"And take him to the nearest fort?"

"No; we will take him right on to Steuben, after your sister is rescued."

"What will become of him when he gets there?"

"Oh, he will be held until some sort of peace terms are arranged between the Sioux and the Government men."

"Then he won't be killed?"

"No."

"Well, he ought to be."

"Well, perhaps he had; but I will not be the one to do it. I never dropped an Indian or bad white man in my life unless there was an extreme necessity for it. This fellow here has given us the information we wanted, and now, as it would not be policy to let him go, we have got to keep him."

Dodging Buck could speak and understand English very well, and a look of hate showed from his eyes as he glared at young Joe Merrill.

It was evident that he meant to kill him if he ever got the chance.

CHAPTER IX.

JIM DART SHOWS WHAT HE IS MADE OF.

Jim Dart had no difficulty in getting away without being seen by the Indians who were hiding in the belt of timber.

He rather liked the idea of passing as an Indian, but, though he was not aware of it, his precaution was entirely unnecessary.

The Indians were keeping a sharp watch in the direction the wagon train lay, and they never thought of looking the way Jim was going.

And even if they had, they would not have seen him, as it would have taken a field-glass to pick him out at that distance.

Dart rode on until he got within a mile of the camp of the emigrants.

Then he removed his Indian disguise and rode leisurely toward the camp.

Fearing that some of the men might take a notion to shoot at him, he took out his handkerchief and waved it.

That he was being watched was more than evident, for the signal was answered almost immediately from the camp.

Jim now put his horse at a gallop and rode on.

He was greeted by Punch Joline, the guide, who seemed to be rather anxious.

"How have yer made out?" he asked. "Any news of ther gal yet?"

"Yes; she is safe, and will be back here before nightfall," Dart answered.

He was not so sure of this, but he took the risk of saying it to encourage the anxious ones in the camp.

Dan Merrill and his wife were standing close by when he said this, and their faces brightened as if by magic.

Then Jim told them just how matters stood, after first explaining where the Indians were located and what they had learned from Dodging Buck, the Indian.

"It is the desire of Young Wild West," he said in conclusion, "that you get ready and follow me at once. He sent me here to tell you this, and did not ask him why, because I am

certain that he knows just what he is doing. How are the wounded?"

"Oh, they are gittin' along all right. There's no one laid up. We lost three men, though."

At this juncture Hustling Hal walked up to Jim.

He had a bandage around his head, but was able to be around. "What about Lena?" he asked.

The boy quickly explained matters to him.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "We will start at once. I have the greatest of faith in what Young Wild West says, and as I am now able to put up a fight again, we can't get there too soon."

The emigrants now began to hustle about in their preparations to move, and while the women folks were stowing the cooking utensils in the wagons the men saw to it that their firearms were in good order.

Jim was not sure what Wild's idea was, but he had an idea that the train was to be led past the timber strip for the purpose of drawing the Indians to make an attack on it. Then Wild would swoop down upon the camp and rescue the captive girl.

That was the way Wild's chum figured it out, and he was exactly right in his figuring, too.

In a little while the oxen were hitched to the wagons.

Then, at the word from the old guide, the teamsters cracked their whips, and the train got in motion.

Hustling Hal had so far recovered from the effects of the blow he had received on the head that he rode his horse at the side of Jim.

He was so anxious about the fate of his sweetheart that he made the boy tell him again what had been gleaned from Dodging Buck.

"You think they have not harmed her, then?" he asked.

"I certainly do. Redskins seldom harm a hair in the head of their female captives till they get them to their village," Jim replied. "You may depend upon it that, beyond being badly frightened, she is all right."

"I hope so," averred the young guide fervently.

Dart had laid out the course they were to take, and they were now proceeding in a direction that would take them right past the timber strip, within half a mile of it.

But it was tedious work, for the oxen could not be made to move very fast.

But gradually they neared the place, and soon the timber was in plain sight.

"I don't know just exactly what will happen," said Jim to Punch Joline. "But I think it would be a good idea for everybody to be ready for an attack from the Indians."

"That's jest my opinion exactly," was the retort. "Boys, keep your eyes peeled now!"

"Right you are!" came the response from the men.

"An' tell ther wimmen folks to pile up some stuff on ther sides of ther wagons next to ther timber, an' lay low, so a stray bullet can't find 'em."

This order was at once communicated to the women, and they lost no time in obeying.

A great many of the emigrants could not see the wisdom of going so close to the spot where the Sioux were supposed to be.

They had enough of them that morning, and they wanted to get as far away from them as possible.

It was possible that outside of Lena Merrill's parents and her lover, they all thought that way.

But none of them wanted to go on and leave the fair young girl to her fate, for all that.

On plodded the oxen and nearer became the timber.

In fifteen minutes more they would be nearly opposite to the spot where the Sioux were camped on the bank of the river.

The sight of the wagon train passing so close to them would surely tempt the red demons to attack it, Jim thought.

And he was anxious to see them do it.

A few minutes later his desire was gratified, for before the wagon train was opposite the place where the Indian camp was situated a score or more of forms could be seen sneaking from the cover of the trees and making for the open prairie, evidently with the purpose of heading off the train.

"They are coming!" said Hustling Hal, as he cocked his rifle.

"Yes," answered Jim, a grim smile playing about his mouth. "I guess we had better begin to pick them off."

His rifle went to his shoulder as he spoke, and the next instant a sharp report rang out.

One of the nearest Indians leaped high in the air and dropped to the no more.

This had no sooner happened when the rest of the sneaking

forms arose and rushed straight for the train, yellin' like so many fiends as they came.

Then the sturdy men of the train began to pick them off one by one.

"Don't miss a shot," cautioned Punch Joline; and they did their best not to.

Crack—crack—crack!

Both Indians and whites were firing now, and the second edition of the day's fighting was on in earnest.

More of the Sioux were rushing from the woods now.

It was evidently their intention to engage them in the open for a time, and then lead them to the timber, where they could mow them down from behind the trees.

But Jim Dart did not propose that any such thing should happen.

Young Wild West had told him to lead the emigrants past the timber, and he was going to do it, if they would obey him.

When half a dozen of the Indians had dropped from their bullets, Hustling Hal wanted to lead a charge upon them.

"Stay right where you are!" cried Jim. "Make them come to us, if they want to fight so badly. If we charge them we are bound to get the worst of it. Let me carry out the plan of Young Wild West."

That settled it.

Not another word was said about making a charge.

The attacking Indians were now lying low in the prairie grass, and it was hard to see them.

But Jim knew they would not come too close, unless they got too reckless.

As yet no one in the train had been hit.

Under the boy's skilful tactics they were getting along nicely.

There were now probably fifty of the Sioux outside the edge of the woods, and they were doing their best to creep closer, so they could do more damage.

But every now and then a bullet from the brave band of prairie pilgrims would find a mark, and the death-cry of a bold warrior would ring out.

"If they keep on a little longer in this way there won't be a great many of them left," said Jim.

"They are so anxious to git hold of ther oxen an' horses that they can't keep away from us, I guess," retorted the old guide.

He was right in this, for suddenly the red demons grew desperate, and made a dash for them.

"Lay it onto them thick!" cried Jim Dart.

The rifles sounded now in a roar, and though many of the Indians dropped, the rest came right on.

They kept shooting as they came, too, and suddenly one of the oxen and a horse fell.

Yells of triumph came from the copper-hued horde as they saw the ox go down.

There was a whole lot of fresh meat for them, they no doubt thought.

But as desperate as their charge was, they could not reach the wagon train.

They realized this a little too late, for when they did beat a retreat, nearly half of their number were left dead and dying on the plain.

Just as they started for the cover of the trees again the sounds of rapid firing could be heard from the other side of the timber strip.

"Hurrah!" cried Jim Dart, waving his hat in the air. "Wild has attacked the camp from the other side."

The victorious men of the wagon train joined him in a hearty cheer.

They were elated at having beaten the Sioux off with such telling effect, and they felt like rushing right on and annihilating them on the spot.

But Jim restrained them.

"We will pass right on, as I was told to do," he said. "Leave the ox and horse lie where they fell and keep right ahead."

This was done, as had been everything else he ordered.

But they had not gone far when Jim noticed that the firing was on the increase in the woods.

"I wonder if they need any help there?" he thought. "There are only eleven of them against the whole gang of redskins."

After a moment's thought he called a halt again.

"I think we had better charge them fellows and give them a few shots from the rear," he said to the old guide. "Our friends are having it hot and heavy with them over on the other side."

"I'm glad to hear you say that," was the reply. "Come on,

boys, we are goin' to give ther reds a little of their own medicine.

There were about a dozen mounted men in the party, and they all responded with a cheer.

The frontiers and a few others were of course riding in the wagons, and they were told to stay and watch the train.

With Jim Hart in the lead and hustling Hal riding close on his left, the brave men started for the retreating Indians.

Crack—crack!

Crack—crack—crack!

The rifles popped away irregularly, and the Indians who had not yet reached the cover of the trees ran like frightened sheep.

But our friends knew that as soon as they got to cover they would begin to shoot.

Jim swerved to the left as the last one got among the trees, and the band of whites swung around to meet Young Wild West and his men.

Great confusion prevailed in the narrow timber land now.

The Sioux were running in every direction, it seemed, and presently one of them dashed out in front of Jim Dart and sought to escape by riding over the prairie.

He was one of the few who had a horse.

He emptied his revolver at the whites, and then with a yell of defiance, hurled the weapon toward them.

The men were going to shoot him down, but Dart checked them.

"Leave him to me," he said. "Keep a watch on the wagons. I hear the shouts of victory from Young Wild West's men, so I'll run this fellow down and make a prisoner of him!"

Dart liked nothing better than an exciting chase after a redskin.

"Whoopee!" he shouted, after the manner of the cowboys, and then he darted after the Indian.

There was less than a hundred yards between them when the race began, and the horse Jim was riding being the better of the two, he gained rapidly.

In less than five minutes it was all over, and then Jim Dart came riding back with his prisoner's hands tied behind him.

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

Jim Dart had not been gone long when Young Wild West concluded to go out on a little scout and find out how the camp of the Sioux was situated.

He no sooner decided on this than he got ready.

"I am going out on foot," he said to Cheyenne Charlie. "You take charge till I come back."

"All right," replied the scout. "How long are you goin' to be gone?"

"Only long enough to get to the vicinity of the camp of the redskins and back. If I find out just where they have got the girl captive it will be all the better for us when the time comes."

Wild kept close to the river bank and made good time in going toward the place where he knew the Indians were located.

The tall reeds and scraggy willows that lined the bank gave him a good opportunity to get along without being seen.

In about ten minutes he was close enough to the camp to hear the jabber of the red men as they conversed in their own tongue.

But the bushes were so thick at that point that he could not see into their camp.

He must get a little nearer.

So he worked his way around to the right with the stealth of a panther.

He was now at the edge of the hollow, and pushing a bunch of reeds aside he could see the whole camp.

The Indians were sitting and standing about with their weapons ready for instant use.

Those who possessed rifles had them in their hands.

In one corner of the hollow was a bunch of cedars that had been cut out, and as our hero noticed that a man stood near them with his eyes fixed upon the bunch, he at once came to the conclusion that the captive girl was there.

She would not be seen anywhere else, so that must be the place.

Young Wild West had looked for the space of a couple of minutes before he saw a sign of movement.

"I think I can get there and see if the girl is really there," he muttered under his breath. "Jove! I'll risk it!"

The next minute he was working his way cautiously around to reach a point that was directly behind the rudely constructed bower.

He was dangerously close to the Indians now—in fact, he was inside their lines, but nothing daunted, he kept right on.

In another minute Wild was within a dozen feet of the cut cedars, and then as he paused and listened he could hear some one sobbing.

It was Lena Merrill.

The girl had been holding up wonderfully, and though she did not know it, her mind was being eased a trifle by the fact of the flow of tears.

"If I only dared to risk it," thought our hero, "I could work my way right inside that bower without the redskin on guard knowing it. I wonder if she would give a scream if I were to do it."

The more he thought about it the more he felt inclined to try.

He felt of his revolvers, and finding them all right, started slowly and silently for the cedars.

He was going to take the risk.

The Indian who had been assigned to watch the girl was on the other side, and he was looking the other way.

He could hear the captive sobbing and crying, but that did not bother him in the least.

No sympathy could possibly come from such as he.

Young Wild West had now reached the cedars.

He thrust out his hand and gently moved one of them aside.

Instantly the sobbing ceased.

The girl had noticed the movement.

A sudden thought came into the boy's head, and without any hesitation he acted upon it.

He thrust one of his revolvers through the opening, handle foremost.

He could not see, so he held it there for the space of a second.

Then it was taken from his hand.

Thus encouraged, he flattened himself upon the ground and then boldly pushed his head through.

Lena Merrill was seated on the ground within three feet of his face, and when she saw him a smothered cry came from her lips.

It was just possible that she thought it was her lover who was coming to her rescue.

As she had never seen Young Wild West before, she did not really know whether he was a friend or foe.

But one look at his handsome, manly face told her that he was her friend.

She still held the revolver in her hand, and with a reassuring nod, Wild crept further into the bower.

Just then the guard gave a guttural "Ugh!" and started around the bunch of cedars.

Acting on the first impulse that came to him, Wild drew his whole body inside the little enclosure.

And he got there just in the nick of time, though he did not know exactly how close he came to being discovered, as he could not see.

He was now in a critical position—one not to be envied, by any means.

If the chief should happen to take it into his head to peep in and see how his fair captive was getting on, he would most surely be lost.

Of course it is more than probable that in such an event he would make a bold attempt to get away with the girl, but he could hardly hope to be successful.

Finally, as he heard the Indian on guard walk a little further away, Wild said in a very low whisper:

"I come from your friends in the wagon train. I am going to save you, but not till the proper time comes. I left your brother less than a mile from here."

"And Hal Hanby—where is he?" came the reply, in the same low tone.

Young Wild West shook his head.

"I don't know him," he said. "I do not know the names of the men belonging to the train."

"He is my —"

The girl blushed a deep crimson and said no more.

"I understand," Wild nodded. "I guess he is all right. Your friends got the best of the Indians, you know, just as you were seized and carried off. Myself and friends arrived just in time to hurry the red fiends along just a little."

"I am so glad you came."

Lena Merrill forgot herself and spoke aloud in a joyous tone when she said this.

Wild knew something was going to happen then, so he quickly drew his knife from his belt.

Then he was upon his feet with the quickness of a cat.

The next instant the boughs parted and the guard thrust his head in.

His face came within an inch of Wild's, and with a look of surprise he opened his mouth to cry out.

But already our hero's blade was descending, and what would have been a loud note of warning turned out to be only a gurgle.

"It had to be done," muttered the brave boy under his breath. "There is one less to fight now."

The body of the Sioux sank to the ground slowly, and as luck would have it, remained in a sitting posture right against the tree that formed the main support for the cedar boughs.

The cedars had been moved considerably by what had taken place, and our hero could see outside.

He breathed a sigh of relief when he saw that the other Indians had not been attracted by the killing of one of their number.

Then a long and tedious wait followed.

But Young Wild West was patient, being used to such things.

He felt that he dared not make the attempt to take the girl from the spot just yet.

Alone he would be able to get away all right.

But if he went alone he was afraid she would grow nervous and become unable to restrain herself.

No; he was in for it now, and he meant to take her with him when he went.

He was waiting for Jim Dart to come along with the wagon train.

Even if the Indians did not attack the train, they would be attracted by it, and that would give him a chance, possibly, to effect the rescue.

Just as Wild was thinking it was about time for the train to show up, he heard a confusion in the camp.

Peering out, he saw about half of the redskins leaving the camp and making their way cautiously toward the open prairie.

"Our time to get out of here will come in a very few minutes," he whispered to the girl. "I want you to be very careful and do just as I say when it does come."

"All right," was the reply. "I shall not make a mistake, like I did a little while ago. You may depend on me to do just as you say."

The firing began just then, and as it continued more of the Indians left the camp.

Those that remained were in a state of great excitement, but none of them were paying the least attention to the bower of cedars, with the stiffening form of the dead sentinel before it.

Crooked Foot, the chief, must have forgotten his fair captive, for he, too, left the camp and hastened to take a hand in the attack on the wagons.

"Now is our time," whispered Wild. "Come on! Keep low to the ground, and do like I do as near as you possibly can."

The girl nodded in a nervous manner, and then, as Wild crept out into the open she boldly followed.

They had just emerged when suddenly an Indian came running that way, and stumbled over the daring prince of the saddle.

Young Wild West strove to silence him, but failed to reach him, and a warning cry went up from the redman's lips.

Crack!

Wild had to shoot now, and he started right in at it.

The Indian dropped, and then holding fast to Lena Merrill's hand, he dashed in the direction he had come from when he set out.

The escaping pair had got about fifty feet when who should appear before them but Crooked Foot himself.

He had just thought of his captive, and was hastening to the bower he had caused to be made for her.

When he saw Young Wild West leading her away on a run, he raised the heavy revolver he had in his hand and fired a shot.

But luckily for Wild, his aim was bad, and the bullet went a foot to the right of him.

He was about to fire again, when a shot from our hero's revolver laid him low.

That was the end of Crooked Foot.

But the two were not out of danger yet, for there were Indians all around them now.

Some were coming and some were going.

Wild felt sure that the noise of the battle would bring Cheyenne Charlie to the spot in a hurry; but would they get there in time? That was the question.

On he dashed with his fair charge, shooting right and left as he went.

The Indians, not knowing that their chief was dead, did not shoot at him, for fear of hitting the girl, and that alone kept the brave boy from being riddled.

The river could now be seen from between the trees and in ten seconds more they would be on its bank.

Nearly five minutes had elapsed since the first lot of Indians had opened fire on the train, and if Cheyenne Charlie had started, he ought to be there now.

And he was, too, for as Wild and Lena dashed out upon the river bank the scout and his men put in an appearance right before them.

Then a fierce conflict ensued between the new arrivals and the Sioux in the camp.

But the red men were fighting desperately and without tact now.

They were attacked from both sides of the camp, and the hurried shots they fired went wild.

In a little while it was all over.

One of the men who had come from the train with Wild got killed and another was wounded slightly.

A few minutes later they joined Jim Dart and the rest of the men.

The Indians were badly routed, and some of them were taking to the river in their mad efforts to escape.

"Let them go," said Young Wild West. "Those who get away will have something to think about as long as they live. The girl has been saved, and that is all that is wanted now."

The men broke into a cheer, and a few minutes later the wagon train resumed its journey to Steuben.

During the fight that morning and the one they had just finished, the emigrants had lost five good men.

There were several wounded, too, but it could not be helped.

Hustling Hal was overjoyed at the safe return of his sweetheart.

When he had listened to how Young Wild West had saved her he could not thank the young hero enough.

"Young Wild West," said he, the tears starting into his eyes, "I shall never forget you for what you have done for us. I am going to stop in Steuben when we get there, and some day I hope to marry Lena Merrill. When the wedding comes off I want you there to witness it. I want all your friends there, too. We were going to wait for a year, but after what has happened, I guess I can hurry it along a little. Will you promise me to come to the wedding?"

"Yes, I will promise," answered Wild. "I own a ranch a few miles from Steuben, so you see I can kill two birds with one stone, as the saying goes. I can come to your wedding and pay a visit to my ranch at the same time."

Merril, Lena's father, had been listening to this conversation, and he now said:

"I don't know about this wedding coming off under a year. Lena's mother thinks she is hardly old enough to get married."

"See here, Mr. Merrill," said Wild, "will you take a little advice from me in regard to that?"

"Yes; I certainly will."

"Then let the couple suit themselves. Let them get married whenever they see fit. It won't do any good to make them wait, and it may make them go and get the knot tied on the sly. You just leave it to them, now, and I will wager it will all come out right."

"All right," was the laughing rejoinder. "I will do as you say, Mr. West."

There is but little more to add to this story.

The wagon train, accompanied by Young Wild West and his partners, reached Steuben without further mishap.

Before they arrived there, however, the prisoner Jim had taken was let go, after giving his promise that he would never commit another depredation, or raise his hand against a white man.

A few days later Young Wild West reached Weston, where some money due Wal Wisp was paid him.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG WILD WEST'S BARGAIN; OR, A RED MAN WITH A WHITE HEART."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

H. L. Richie, a rancher living near Okaton, S. Dak., is the owner of a rooster which evidently aspires to become known as the man killing rooster. As a result of a spurring from the rooster, Richie was in a critical condition recently from blood poisoning, and yet feels the effects of the wound inflicted by the bird. Richie was opening the door of his hen house when the rooster jumped upon his knee and spurred him twice.

A report issued by Admiral Thaon di Revel, chief of the Italian naval staff, shows that Austrian wireless messages are intercepted regularly by the Italians, says a special dispatch from Rome. The Italians have been enabled to obtain this information, which is of immense military value, by the use of a new device invented by Guglielmo Marconi. The device is said to make it impossible for the Austrians to intercept Italian messages.

There is somewhere among the wilds of Donegal, Ireland, a March hare carrying about with him the sum of \$25 tied in a white handkerchief. A farmer's daughter, going home after shopping with the money tied in her handkerchief, came upon a hare in a trap, and not wishing to lose such a prize took out her handkerchief and tied it around the hare's neck. When she released the hare from the trap the lively animal escaped with the handkerchief.

Nine camps have been opened in Canada for the training of men for oversea service. Each is placed in an area of from three hundred acres to ten miles square, and the nine are spaced across the 3,000 miles of the Dominion's breadth at almost regular intervals. During the summer 100,000 men will train in these camps. The training is to be of the most practical nature and the work made to conform as nearly as possible to actual fighting conditions in Europe. To this end Canadian officers and non-commissioned officers who have been invalided home will be sent to the several camps to assist.

Gen. Alexander Bertram, chairman of the Shell Committee appointed by the Dominion Government to superintend the manufacture of munitions of war, addressing the delegates to the Canadian Manufacturers' Association recently, said that orders had been placed in Canada by the British Government for 9,600,000 shrapnel shells. Although at the outbreak of the war there was only one shell-making plant in Canada, with a capacity of seventy-five shells per day, there are now 130 establishments engaged in the manufacture of shrapnel, and within a short time the output would be between 40,000 and 50,000 shells a day, Gen. Bertram said.

Cowboys in French Guiana seem to be in luck. They are reported to be working a gold mine on their own account. Their workings have apparently so far failed to discover where they have successfully pegged their claim. They would like to escape from the settlement by two

or threes and remain hidden for a day or two. They then return with their pockets full of nuggets and have a great time. Others get away in their turn, but come back eventually, also with gold. The mine is thus kept regularly working by shifts of convicts. The latter when they return to the settlement are regularly sentenced to a few days' imprisonment for absence without leave, but this is a low price to pay for a share in a gold mine. Where the latter is the authorities have never yet been able to discover.

Two masked robbers, with revolvers drawn, boarded a Southern Pacific train en route from San Francisco to Los Angeles at Chatsworth, Cal., at midnight the other day, robbed passengers of \$565 and escaped. Men and women in the last four coaches of the train were compelled to give up their money and jewelry. After collecting their booty the bandits pulled the signal cord, stopping the train at Hewitt and fled. Officials said they believed an accomplice was waiting near the station with an automobile. Several shots were fired at the robbers as they swung from the train, and they returned the fire, but no one was hit.

"There are two ways to invite war," said President Arthur Twining Hadley, of Yale University, on June 6. "One is to make too much preparation and the other to make too little. I believe we are going very far in the direction of the latter. Personally, I am heartily in favor of preparedness." Dr. F. S. Luther, president of Trinity College, of Hartford, Conn., said that he was thoroughly in favor of the most complete preparation. "I think we should have a powerful army and an equally powerful navy," he said. "Our young men should be taught at least to shoot straight, to take care of themselves in the field, to speak the truth and to fear no man."

On a property where the rabbit shooting was strictly preserved, upon the southern coast of England, a boy was caught with two dead rabbits in his possession, and nothing that would account for their decease. A search of his pocket revealed nothing but two live crabs of small dimensions, the end of a candle and a box of matches. Under promise of release the urchin was persuaded to disclose his method of procedure. First he selected a likely burrow, and then stripped off his clothes, putting his coat over one hole, his trousers over another, and his shirt over the third. He lit the candle end, dropped a little grease upon the crab's back, and stuck the lighted candle thereon, and then put the crab at an unoccupied opening. Straightaway the frightened torchbearer fled sideways into the darkness and explored the innermost depths; while the boy, expectant as a terrier, awaited events outside. Presently a rabbit bolted into the coat; as it did so that boy was after it like a shot, and boy, rabbit and coat all rolled over together, the boy rising from the fray with the rabbit in his clutches.

SINBAD THE SECOND

— OR —

The Wonderful Adventures of a New Monte Cristo

By "PAWNEE JACK"

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER I.

THE YACHT AVENGER—A TERRIBLE STORY.

"Parbleu! but it's the Avenger's boat!"

"And with himself on board."

"Yes, yes."

The first speaker, Jacques Dupree, a Frenchman, shrugged his shoulders, took a short turn along the quarter deck of the yacht, and then came back and leaned over the rail with a very dissatisfied look upon his face.

His companion, Con Cregan, a genuine son of the Emerald Isle, took no notice of him, but continued to gaze at the advancing boat. It was a mere white speck upon the water still. The boat was white, and the men in it were all clothed in garments of the same color.

For some minutes the two men kept their eyes fixed on the small craft until swift rowing had brought it near enough for them to distinguish the people it contained.

"Yes, 'tis the masher, sure enough," said Con Cregan. The Frenchman grunted.

"Jack, my hearty"—Con always called him Jack—"it's yourself that don't seem glad to see him so soon."

Jacques Dupree uttered an angry exclamation.

"Sacre! but this must stop, mon ami; this must stop. We're not like men to be carried all over the world by a boy."

"Faith! it's yourself betther tell him so."

"I mean to, this very day," cried the Frenchman, quite excited now. "I will do so. Travel! travel! travel! all the time travel! no rest. Jacques Dupree for one is tired of it."

"Shure, an' ye ain't the only one. There's more on board like you, Jack, I'm afther thinking. Count me for one."

"Why do you not say so?"

"Now you've got me. Faith, an' it's meself'd rather face a tiger wid all his stripes on than the masher when he's in a rage."

"Coward! then I will!"

"Look here, Jack, coward's a trifle strong, ain't it? Begorra, we won't quarrel about that, though. You start the music, an' faith I'll make one of the band, an' Ivan——"

"Ivan? What about him?"

"He'll be with us."

"Good! If the order to sail is given we will go straight to the cabin and demand explanations. Don't fail me."

"You have my word."

The boat had drawn up alongside the Avenger now, and in a moment an active, athletic figure clothed in white had climbed lightly up the ladder and had sprung on the deck.

He gave an eager glance around, seeming to take in everything as he did so, and he appeared to be satisfied with what he saw, for a pleased look showed itself on his face.

"You've got up steam: good! Weigh anchor at once, for we sail immediately."

Then without another word he passed rapidly across the deck into the cabin, which was flush with it.

"At last! at last!" he cried, and flung himself down on a long, low sofa richly upholstered in crimson velvet.

Very handsome he looked in his white suit and yachting cap of the same color. When he threw his cap on the table you could see that he had an abundance of hair, black as jet, which spread itself in rebellious curls over his high forehead. His features were finely chiseled, showing an aquiline nose, clean-cut mouth, and a chin denoting resolution of no common order.

He could not have been more than seventeen, yet there were times when a gray look of care came over his face that made him appear to be a man of mature age.

The silence on deck caused him to look towards the forepart of the vessel, and he uttered an angry exclamation as he did so. He was rushing out of the cabin when three figures appeared at the doorway. They were Con Cregan, Jacques Dupree, and the Russian, Ivan Zuroff.

"What does this mean?" cried the young man, sternly. "Who dares to disobey my orders?"

"It means," answered the Frenchman, boldly, "that we wish to talk with you, captain."

"Stay, Kama," said the young man in a kind tone to his attendant, who that instant came from one of the berths ranged around the cabin. "I have no secrets from you."

The attendant smiled and walked over to his master, standing respectfully by his side. He was of about the same age, of a complexion slightly dusky-colored, but with straight and pleasing features. Evidently he belonged to one of the islands of the Southern seas.

"You have no secrets from Kama," said the Frenchman, somewhat scornfully, "why from us?"

"Saul, that's it," put in Con Cregan, hastily, finding courage at last. "You see, masther, it's like this: Jack, and Fran and me, we've had enough knocking about. Faith, it's only last night we got to Sydney, an', begorra, we're off again, without having time to git the salt taste out of our mouths."

"Or the whisky in there, Cregan; that's more like it."

"We cannot live always on the water like fishes," said the Frenchman. "We want the pleasures of society. We want rest."

"Rest, that is it," said Ivan Zuroff.

For a moment it seemed as if the young man would give vent to his rage, for his eyes blazed like fire, and the red blood rushed to his sunburnt face. He checked himself, however, and spoke very quietly, though with biting scorn.

"When I took you from a living death in Siberia," he said, addressing Ivan, "you did not reproach me, though there you had rest."

Ivan's head fell on his breast in a shame-faced way. He said nothing.

"You swam aboard my yacht, Con Cregan, at Queens-town, in Ireland. At some peril—'twas my life I risked—I saved you from the dungeons where the British put Irish patriots. Rest! You might have had it there."

"Masther, masther," murmured Con Cregan.

"You, Jacques Dupree, were sent as a political prisoner from France to New Caledonia. I knew you to be an honorable man, and I brought you away. It seems I was wrong."

"Pardon, pardon," exclaimed Jacques Dupree, in trembling tones. "We are all wrong, very wrong. Forgive us and forget our words. Come, my friends, come."

"No, stay! You are not altogether wrong. You should have had more confidence in me, but that is no matter now. I feel I ought to trust you more than I have done. Sit down, my tale is a long one. Be seated, my friends, and listen."

Side by side on the sofa the three men sat themselves, the man, or rather boy, they called "master," standing facing them, with Kama close behind him.

"Nearly ten years ago," began the young man, "there was an American family in Sydney who had arrived there to sail for their own country. There was the father, the mother, two boys, ten and eight years old respectively, and a girl of fourteen. Remember, gentlemen, father, mother, daughter, two sons."

The young man seemed anxious to impress this part of the narrative on his audience.

"The father, though only forty, was wealthy. He had been very fortunate at the mines at Ballarat first and in speculation after. So he went back to his own country, for which he longed, and so that his children might be brought up as young Americans should be. He sold out his investments, taking a large part of the proceeds in gold, the rest in a draft drawn on a San Francisco bank. At Sydney he had a friend named Saul Dexter. Mark that word, a friend!"

The speaker's emotions seemed to overpower him here, and he could not proceed for a while. The three men were listening with breathless interest now.

"Saul Dexter," said the young man, "was captain and owner of a bark called the Swiftsure, and as he wrote say-

ing he was on the point of sailing for San Francisco, it was decided to go with him. It is always so pleasant to travel with friends. One week out a terrible scene happened."

"The ship was wrecked!" cried the Frenchman.

"No," continued the narrator. "The American family were seized in their cabins—the lust of gold did it—and carried on deck."

"Murdered?"

"You shall hear. A boat was alongside the Swiftsure, tossing on the angry sea. 'Put them aboard!' cried Saul Dexter. The father threw himself on his knees and begged for mercy, appealing to him in the name of humanity, and for the sake of old friendship. 'Take the gold, take it all,' cried the poor man, 'but spare our lives.' Saul Dexter laughed. Ah! it is a laugh that rings in the ears forever. 'Put them aboard,' he shouted, savagely. Again the father appealed to him. 'Be satisfied with my life, spare my wife and children.' Saul Dexter laughed again, and turned to the mate who was speaking to him. 'Better knock 'em all on the head,' said Dick Quince, the mate, 'it's safer.' 'Safer!' sneered the captain, 'why, there's not an island within seven hundred miles, and that boat won't live an hour. Besides, I don't like shedding blood. Ha! ha!'"

Jacques Dupree sprang to his feet with clenched fists.

"A monster!" he cried, with quivering lips; "it is horrible, horrible."

"The party was put on board the boat. The ship went on, the captain and the crew mocking the poor people with expressions of hope for their safety. On the boat was neither food nor drink."

"They all perished!" cried the impatient Frenchman.

"Four days later the boat was washed up on an island not marked in the chart. It contained four corpses and one living thing, the youngest boy."

Tears were in the young man's eyes now, and Kama, who seemed as much friend as attendant, put one hand affectionately on his shoulder, whilst he pressed his master's hand with the other.

"Courage," said Kama, "and wait."

"Wait? Oh! it is so long. My friends," said the young man, "some day you will know more. You will understand how this yacht, built like a floating palace, came on the waters. It is enough now for me to tell you what my own purpose in life is. Revenge on Saul Dexter and every man who sailed on the Swiftsure with him. Here, before you, I swear it again."

"With you to the death!" cried Ivan Zuroff, sternly, "through fire and sword."

"Faith, an' it's only a poor Irishman I am, an' it's only one life I have, masther," said Con Cregan, rubbing his perfectly bald head and tugging at his whiskers, "but, begorra, that life's yours."

"Captain," exclaimed Jacques Dupree, "never will I question you again. For you they shall cut me in a thousand pieces."

"Thanks, my friend; thanks. I know your devotion, or I should not have been so patient with you. I know I can trust you to the end."

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

ANTS WITH GREAT APPETITES.

White ants are reported to have recently worked havoc in the Zenkoji temple, Nagano, Japan, a noted center of pilgrimage by Buddhist devotees. When discovered by the sextons the ants had already eaten the golden columns of the inner shrine of the temple hollow.

CANNED DOG STARTS FIRE.

Clarence, nine years old, gave Judge Hulbert, of Detroit, Mich., a graphic version of how he and Harold, twelve years old, set fire to a barn recently. He said they tied a can to a dog's tail, filled the can with dried grass and put a match to the grass. Inadvertently, they threw a bone in the open door of the barn in question. The dog, unmindful of the burning can attached to his tail, dashed into the barn and started to gnaw at the bone. In this manner, according to Clarence, the barn was set on fire.

SOLDIER DIES IN BALL GAME.

Overcome by the excitement of a game of baseball and breathless from his failure to reach first base, Corporal William H. Win of the One Hundred and Thirty-fifth Company of Fort Totten, N. Y., fell dead on the baseball field at Whitestone, L. I.

The game was between the Columbia team of Whitestone and a team from Fort Totten. Win had just been thrown out at first and was walking off the diamond when he staggered and fell.

He had been in the service for more than three years, and came originally from Greenfield, N. H.

WED ON A DOG LICENSE.

"Alibi Frank," a confidence man now under conviction and recently brought back from the Joliet prison to testify in police graft trials, asserted in the Criminal Court that he had used a dog license to marry a blind woman, whose money he afterwards stole. Capt. J. O'D. Storen and Detectives Weissbaum and Roth are on trial on the charge of accepting money to protect big criminals.

Frank has testified he had paid large sums for protection, and Assistant State's Attorney Nealato asked him:

"Isn't it a fact that you got a license, framed a marriage with a blind woman, then got all her money and ran away?"

"Yes, I did that trick, but only once."

SEEK INDIAN LOOT.

Prospectors are digging up the ground in the vicinity of a huge coffin-shaped rock near Cherokee, Cal., on which there are strange Indian characters which have been a mystery for years.

The treasure is said by Charles Morrison and wife, aged Indians of Oregon City, four miles from Cherokee, to have been hidden by tribesmen in early days.

About fifty years ago the Indians were troublesome in

Bates County and robbed a number of miners. The money and gold which they stole is said by the Oregon City couple to have been hidden near the coffin-shaped rock. Efforts are being made to decipher the inscriptions on the rock in the hope they would give a key to the location of the supposed treasure.

WAR HITS CANADA HARD.

With falling revenues, a rapidly growing pension list and 12,000 men under arms and receiving a higher rate of pay than the troops of any other nation engaged in the war, the Dominion Government has a hard problem of finance on its hands. Already \$150,000,000 has been voted for the war, but it is quite evident that if peace does not come within another year the Government will be compelled to resort to heavier taxation than already exists to meet the demands.

At present the treasury is being deprived of \$1,000,000 a day, the heaviest expenditure in the history of the Dominion. Public works which were under construction when the war started are being carried on, but no new enterprises have been or will be undertaken. According to statistics just issued by the Department of Labor, 75,000 men are out of employment. It has been suggested that the authorities enter upon various enterprises and public works to provide employment, but the lack of revenue and the limit on the Government's borrowing power makes such a course impossible.

A NEW BURGLAR-PROOF SAFE.

A recent report from the American consul at Nuremberg, Germany, announces that the famous Krupp Works at Essen have discovered a burglar-proof safe which will "put all the burglars to shame." The discovery consists in the production of a steel which will withstand the attacks of the oxyacetylene flame, and that it will be impossible to burn a hole through the safe with the acetylene flame either in the time at his disposal or the amount of acetylene and oxygen which the burglar could carry to his base of operations.

At a melting test it required one and one-quarter hours of burning and used up 176 gallons of acetylene and 534 gallons of oxygen to burn a hole 19-10 inches in diameter and 14-10 inches deep into the plate. Such an operation did not burn an opening which would allow the hand to be inserted.

In order to produce a hole large enough to admit the hand, the operation requires six hours of time and 2,400 gallons of acetylene and 2,600 gallons of oxygen. This would require 600 pounds of raw material for the burglar's operation besides requiring almost the whole night to burn through a plate 2 inches thick.

The steel from which the safe is constructed is so hard that it cannot be bored and tapped and all screws and rivets must be made and cast with the plates.

THE ROB ROYS

—OR—

BOLD BOB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM

By DICK ELLISON

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XIV (continued)

By this time they had strolled arm in arm out into the grounds, and there in the soft, silver moonlight they were strolling to and fro arm in arm. It was an ideal night, and who could blame them if sentiment got the better of reason and common sense. It was just the kind of a night for young lovers to be about, and our hero and our heroine were not slow to take advantage of the fact.

Henry Selden was not in a very pleasant frame of mind when he reached San Remo that night. If wishes could have killed, every inmate of Fairview would be lying cold and dead before him.

"Blame them all, they will turn on a fellow when he is down on his luck," he muttered between his set teeth. "So long as one has plenty of money, and prosperity attends him, he is all right. Aside from that—bah! I have no patience with any of them."

When Bold Bob and Sidney Worth parted that night, both were happier than they had been for a long time, for there was a general understanding between them which made matters far more agreeable than ever before.

About midnight Sidney and her friend, Barbara Voss, who had remained all night with her, were awakened by the sound of male voices just below their window, and hastily springing from their bed, they rushed to the casement, and hastily flinging it open, looked out. By the rays of silver moonlight, they could see the forms, but they could not discern the faces. Still they could hear the voices in the old Scotch songs—songs ever new, yet old:

"A highland laddie there lived o'er the way,
A laddie both noble, and gallant, and gay;
Who loved a lassie as noble as he,
A bonnie sweet lassie, the Maid o' Dundee;
This lassie had lands, but the laddie had nane,
And yet to her it was all the same,
For dearly she loved him, and said she knew
This laddie, dear laddie, was gude and true.

"Three years or even months had fled,
This laddie and lassie were happily wed;
Sae better wither'd he lived on the bed,
Than bonnie sweet Bessie, the Maid o' Dundee;
A happier home nee man ever had,
Than this which held two hearts so glad,
And never did Bessie have cause to rue
Her wedding day laddie so gude and true.

"But sorrow came to her heart one day,
And her dear darlin' was taken away,
'Then oh, how sad and lone was she,
Poor bonnie sweet Bessie, the Maid o' Dundee;
And when in the ground her darlin' they laid,
Her heart broke, and she fervently prayed:
'O God in heaven let me go too,
And be wi my laddie so gude and true.'"

As the last word of the song died out in silence, both girls listened in rapturous eagerness. The different male voices blended harmoniously, and borne on the still night air it made sweetest music. Not a word was spoken for a few moments, and then suddenly seizing the roses she had worn upon her breast that evening, Sidney threw them down to the silent figures beneath her window.

She saw some one bend down and pick them up in the moonlight, and she knew it was Bold Bob. Her heart gave a great bound, and then seemed to stand still. She was a great deal fonder of the gallant captain of the Rob Roys than she cared to admit, even to her intimate friend, Barbara. She saw him press the half-dying roses to his lips, and then she hurriedly withdrew behind the shelter of the curtains.

"Didn't they sing that song simply divine?" Barbara asked, in a loud, enthusiastic whisper. "I have heard it a hundred times, perhaps, but never before did it sound like it did to-night. I never knew those fellows could sing like that, but say, Sid, I can tell you the secret of it all."

"And what is the secret, Bab?" Sidney asked, her sweet face blushing hotly.

"They are in love," was Barbara's prompt reply. "Heaven bless them both, they are head and heels over in love with us. That's the reason why they sing so divinely. Bob is in love with you, Murt is in love with me, and how can they help singing? And say, Sid, I am just as much in love with him as he is with me. There, the cat is out of the bag, and let him stay out for all I care. If you were honest, Sid, you would confess that you were just as fond of Bob as I am of Murt."

"Hush, Barbara, dear; you do not know what you are saying," Sidney replied, at the same time echoing her friend's sentiments exactly. "I am very fond of Mr. MacGregor as a friend, and I enjoyed the singing."

Barbara's only answer was a low, soft burst of laughter, and then the two friends crept back to the bed again, while their pair of gallants wended their way homeward.

Just as they were passing through a deep, dark wood, halfway between Col. Worth's residence and Fairview, a pistol shot rang out upon the still night air, and Bold Bob dropped to the ground like a log, the bright life blood gushing forth in a crimson tide from a wound in his breast.

CHAPTER XV.

MIKE'S STORY.

A wild cry of alarm burst from Murray Roberts' lips when he saw his chum fall to the ground, and, kneeling down beside him, he raised the helpless head in his arms.

"He is dead! ah, my heaven, he is dead!" he cried, in frantic despair. "Bob, Bob, speak to me, and let me know if you still live! Can it be that you are dead, you, so brave and true, so fearless and lion-hearted? Rob, my dear old pard, why don't you speak to me?"

Still no answer. The handsome face of Bold Bob was whiter than it ever would be when it was lying in its coffin, and for a few agonized moments his life-long friend and comrade, Murray Roberts, thought he was really dead, but placing his ear to his heart, he felt a faint throbbing, and he realized that the gallant captain of the Rob Roys lived.

"Thank heaven, he still lives!" he breathed, fervently. "He is not dead, as I at first feared, and he will yet live to triumph over his enemies. Bob, old man, can you speak to me, or are you too weak?"

Bold Bob raised his heavy eyelids, and stared stupidly at his friend, and then the light of reason returned to him.

"I remember it all now, Murt," he muttered slowly. "Some one shot me, and that is all I can remember. But there is an awful pain here," pressing his hand to his breast and his arm, "and I do not understand it."

"Brace up, old man, and you will be all right," Murray said, soothingly. "Once let us reach the village, and you will be all right. Try and walk. You can if you will, and when you are safe in your own bedroom, you will be yourself again."

"Yes, I know," Bold Bob responded feebly, "but I am weak from loss of blood and I don't feel as if I could drag one step after another."

"You have been shot, old man," and Murray Roberts' voice was choked and husky as he spoke. "But we haven't any idea who the coward was who shot you. It was a cowardly deed, and the man who would do such a thing deserves a fate far worse than hanging."

"Henry Selden has a hand in it, you may depend upon it," Bold Bob broke in, "and I am sure of it. I have no faith in the fellow, and I knew he would stop at nothing to gain his point."

"An' faith an' so do I," a strange voice interrupted, and the next moment Mike McCarthy stood before the two astonished young men. "For I saw th' deed done wid me own two eyes. I saw th' whole thing, an' it's none other than that spalpeen av a Henry Selden that fired th' shot. Bad luck to him, but didn't I see th' whole affair? Shure an' th' devil will never be afther gittin' his own, till he gits

his clutcher on Misther Henry Selden, for he is th' worst son av a gun that I iver had two eyes on. Shure an' I'd loike nothin' better than to be afther beatin' the life out av him. Th' race av him will stop an' coud-day stick, an' he'll niver git his just deserts until he's dancin' at th' end av a rope."

"Are you sure, Mike, that it was Henry Selden who fired the shot that wounded Robert MacGregor?" Murray Roberts asked, earnestly. "Are you sure that you are not mistaken in the man? It is a serious question, remember, and one upon which a great deal depends. It may be the means of ruining a young man's whole life and career. It is a most serious charge, Mike."

"Faith an' I know it is," was faithful Mike's honest answer, "an' do yez be afther thinkin', Misther Murray, that I'm th' mon to be throwin' slurs on a young fellow's head that don't be afther deservin' it? Not on yer loife. Mike McCarthy ain't th' mon to do such a dirty trick, but may heaven forgive me if I ain't tellin' th' truth. I tell yez I saw Henry Selden fire th' shot that hit Misther Bob, an' I can swear to it. He's the dirtiest son av a gun that iver lived, an' it'll do him good to get come up wid. Shure, an' we all love Misther Robert, for he's as white a bye as iver lived, an' we don't intend that any spalpeen loike Henry Selden will get th' better av him. Now, yez can belave me or not, jist as yez loike, Misther Roberts, for as heaven hears me, I am only tellin' yez th' truth."

"Of course we believe you, Mike," Murray Roberts answered, grasping the good-natured, bluff Irishman by the hand. "Why should we doubt your word? We have never yet caught you in a lie, and surely we do not expect to at this late day."

"Divil a lie was Mike McCarthy iver caught in," Mike answered, with a chuckle of delight. "Faith, an' if I'd told more lies I might have been better off, for I've learned by experience that whin a man's honest he's always poor, but let him be crooked and he'll roll in gold. To th' devil wid gold, says I, if yez have to sell yer souls for it. Better be honest an' ate a crust av bread wid a sip av cold wather than to be afther drinkin' wine an' atin' turkey wid de money yez gits by bein' dishonest. Ain't I right in me sentiments, Misther Roberts?"

"You are surely right in your sentiments, Mike," Murray answered, with a laugh, "and if you will always stick to these sentiments you will come out all right. I think you will, for it seems to be in your nature, and what is in one's nature is not easily changed."

"Right yez are, Misther Roberts; right yez are!" Mike responded, warmly. "But now th' next thing for us to do is to get th' bye home. Shure, an' he'll be afther bleedin' to death if we don't, an' heaven knows we can't afford that. He's got to live to bring that spalpeen to time, an' I'll be afther helpin' him, or my name ain't Mike McCarthy. I'm that down on him that I could bate th' loife out av him wid me own hands. Now come along wid yer, Misther Robert, an' we'll have yez in bed in less t'ime than it takes a cat to wink her eye. But av all th' dirty spalpeens, Misther Henry Selden do be th' worst!"

(To be Continued)

TIMELY TOPICS

Mrs. A. McKay, 102 years old, hearing that her daughter, Mrs. J. W. Parfitt, of Redding, Cal., and four small children were on the way from Hayfork to Hyampom by pack train, saddled a horse and rode out five miles on the trail to greet them. She celebrated her hundredth birthday by saddling a horse and riding over to Big Bear, eighteen miles away, going one day and returning the next.

To fall from a spring wagon from which he was spraying a tree and be butted fifteen feet over rough ground by his pet bull, was the experience of John P. Nelson, of Hawkins, Ind. The bull seemed to take the tumble from the wagon as a joke and charged Nelson, apparently in good humor. Nelson was painfully but not seriously bruised. He is of the opinion that if the bull had been really angry he would not have escaped serious injury.

Four diamonds were the cause of the intestinal indigestion from which Thomas Fallon, of Grove and York streets, Jersey City, a money lender, was relieved recently by an operation at Christ Hospital. Fallon says he unintentionally swallowed the diamonds years ago. Six X-ray photographs recently taken of Fallon's abdomen revealed the obstruction. Remnants of two pawntickets were also removed.

The original map made by George Washington in 1775 of the lands on the Great Kanawha River, West Virginia, granted to him by the British Government in 1763 for his services in the Braddock expedition, is now in the possession of the Library of Congress. The map is about two by five feet, and is entirely in the handwriting of Washington. The margin is filled with notes, also in Washington's handwriting, describing the boundary marks set by Washington and different features of the tract.

Mrs. Maud Estes of Kamiah and A. J. Stuart of Stites united in marriage the other day on the Lewiston-Clarkston bridge, just on the Idaho side of the midchannel of the Snake River. The parties had come to Lewiston expecting to be married by their pastor, the Rev. J. B. York, of the Baptist Church of Stites, who was in attendance at an association meeting at Clarkston. On learning of their mission they were invited to be married in the association meeting, but this was impossible because the license was obtained in Idaho, and so the meeting adjourned to the altar of the bridge.

A wireless message about a black cat came all the way from Papeete recently to the marine department of the Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco. With only this one clue, the British ship Dalgonar has drifted for two years a desert of the sea. The wireless message states that the cat's bell and the black cat had been rescued by men from a small trading schooner and safely landed at

Papeete. The Dalgonar, helpless in a storm, was abandoned in midocean in June, 1913. Early in 1914 the French ship Lorrie reported finding the shipwrecked mariners drifting in a small boat. Three had died from exposure, and the fourteen others were in a pitiable condition.

Nearly \$150,000 in bequests, of which about \$90,000 are of a public character, are contained in the will of Miss Lanrastine Cotheal Smith, who died June 1 at her home, No. 23 Fulton street, Newark, N. J., at the age of seventy-seven years. Miss Smith had long been known for her activity in charities and in matters relating to the uplift of her sex. Among the personal bequests are three of \$6,000 each to the three servants, Mrs. Isabella Cuypers, Miss Sarah L. Sipp and Miss Marie Krafft. They are also to receive all of the wearing apparel, jewelry, household effects and all other personal property owned by their late mistress, and are to enjoy a life residence in her Fulton street home. The home thereafter is to go to Trinity Episcopal Church, Newark.

The king alligator of Georgia has been killed at Hutchinson's pond at Adel by M. L. Crowley, after the beast had eluded hunters for twenty-two years. The alligator measured 10 feet 4 inches and had thirty-seven notches on its tail, which shows that it was thirty-seven years old. Many have been the attempts to kill the sly old creature, but always until now it has escaped the bullets aimed at it and has scuttled safely back to its cave. It was the 'gator's appetite for hogs that proved its undoing. Mr. Crowley, who for twenty-two years has been hunting this beast, tied the leg of a porker to a tree near Hutchinson's pond, and hid himself. The wary old 'gator slid out of the water, through a clump of bushes, and was just reaching for the bait when Mr. Crowley fired. The bullet took the beast in a vital spot and killed it instantly.

The stewards of the Jockey Club have engaged detectives to watch trainers and riders who may fall under suspicion. In cases where the suspicion is borne out by facts that the best interests of the turf are not being served, the guilty persons will lose their licenses. This will be tantamount to ruling the offending persons off the turf. Up to the present, racing this season has been particularly clean. The chief fault has been that some jockeys have adopted waiting tactics that resulted in races being lost which should have been won. Whether these tactics were the result of error or have been premeditated is what the stewards are anxious to know. So far they have given the riders the benefit of the doubt, but in order to set their minds at ease they have engaged detectives to follow up the riders and find out with whom they associate. Those who mingle with touts and "sure-thing players" will be punished. The stewards of the National Steeplechase and Hunt Association are working in complete accord with the stewards of the Jockey Club.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

By an ingenious device wild animals can now take their own pictures. A piece of cord is suspended between two trees, and when the animal comes into contact with the cord it fires a fuse cartridge and opens the shutter of a camera, which thus automatically "snaps" the animal.

Miss S. D. Wallace, of Marion County, Ind., got her annual fishing and hunting license at the office of Eugene C. Shireman, State Commissioner of Fisheries and Game. Miss Wallace is sixty-two years old, according to her license, and is five feet six inches in height. She is the oldest woman in the State to receive a similar license prior to a fishing trip in Northern Indiana.

A young buck deer, in order to escape pursuing dogs, committed suicide near Brewster, N. Y., by leaping in front of the Federal Express of the Central New England Railway. The deer was one of a pair which have been roaming over Stuyvesant Fish's country place. The train engineer sent word to the despatcher and John Ingalls, the section foreman, found the deer's body 100 feet away from where the engine hit it. Game Protector Barry has the venison.

At the mid-biennial council of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, Portland, Ore., Mrs. Thomas G. Winter, of Minneapolis, chairman of the literature department of the general federation, created a stir when she proposed that a move be started to have 2,000,000 members of the general federation deny themselves one pair of silk stockings a year and contribute that money to an endowment fund for work of the federation's department in aesthetic lines.

Henry Pfeiffer, of Philadelphia, son of a Cedar Falls pioneer, now head of the Pfeiffer Chemical Company, concluded a two-week's visit with his brother and sisters of Cedar Falls, Iowa, by presenting each of them with a check for \$10,000 and an automobile. His benefactions in this way totaled nearly \$100,000. The beneficiaries are H. J. Pfeiffer, L. Pfeiffer, Mrs. G. C. Merrett, Mrs. W. F. Noble, brother and sisters, and ex-Mayor W. H. Merrett, D. C. Merrett and S. S. Merrett, brothers-in-law.

One of the biggest mountain lions seen in Oklahoma for years, measuring over seven feet from tip to tip and weighing 175 pounds, was killed in a cave in the Gyp Hill by George Steubenville, of Okemulgee. He came upon the lion unexpectedly while exploring the cave with a party of friends, and was armed only with a 22-caliber revolver. It had been known for some weeks that a marauder of some sort, presumably a mountain lion, was playing havoc with poultry and calves. It had been seen disappearing in the darkness several times, but no one had gone near enough to get a shot at it. Steubenville was the only one of the party who was armed at all when they came upon the beast, which was evidently prepared to put up a stiff fight. The cave was dimly lighted by a lantern carried by the exploring cult, but Steubenville was fortunate enough to hit the panther in the eye, killing it instantly.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

"Some people," growled Crabbe, "make me sick." "I should think nearly everybody would make you sick," replied Cutknow.

Doctor—Oh, we'll cure you in a very short time. Patient—You'd better. The longer it takes you to cure me the longer it will take me to pay your bill.

Margaret—Mrs. Tinker called while you were away, mem. Mrs. Morgan—Well, thank goodness that I was out! Margaret—That's what she said, mem.

She—You had a lovely time at the banquet last night, didn't you? He—How do you know? She—Because you look so perfectly awful this morning.

"What a scornful expression Miss Parvinoo always has!" "Yes, it's quite natural, though. She resided the greater portion of her life near a glue factory."

Dolly—Why did Molly accept that funny little Jingleby fellow? Polly—Well, you know she never could resist a bargain. And she says he looked so cheap when he proposed that she just had to take him.

Mrs. Bacon—Who was that man you were bowing and scraping so to at the gate just now? Mr. Bacon—Oh, that's the instalment man. He's just been taking the piano away from next door, and I was thanking him.

He—I wonder what the meaning of that picture is? The youth and the maiden are in a tender attitude. She—Oh, don't you see? He has just asked her to marry him, and she is accepting him. "Ah, how appropriate the title!" "I don't see it." "Why, the card at the bottom says 'Sold.'"

"How much is your fiancée worth?" asked the mother-of-fact father of his romantic daughter. "Oh," replied the latter, enthusiastically, "my Fred is worth millions on millions." "Of course; but I mean how much is he worth in cold cash?" "Well, he has nine dollars in the Dime Savings Bank."

HANDSOME CHARLIE'S CRIME.

By Alexander Armstrong

Once, when in the course of my profession, I had followed a criminal to England, I made the acquaintance of a brother professional of the detective force of London. He was one of their best, and I cultivated his acquaintance. A genuine friendship sprang up between us, and at parting we mutually agreed to keep each other posted when notorious criminals left either country.

Having learned from my friend that a certain English criminal, Handsome Charlie, might be expected in New York by a certain steamer, I went to the pier when she came in.

A young man, not more than twenty-eight or thirty, well-formed, with small side whiskers and well-trimmed moustache. Handsome he certainly was, and the last man in a thousand one would have picked out as a hardened wretch and desperate rascal.

Yet such he was, and shrewd, too, in the bargain. So shrewd, that, although half a dozen murders had been imputed to him, he had never left traces enough behind to enable them to convict him.

Only several months before an English baronet, returning to his home in the country in a carriage, had been stopped on the road, murdered, and a big sum of money he had had that day paid to him was stolen.

This was also supposed to be Handsome Charlie's work, but they could obtain no proof. That I looked closely at a man with such a reputation as this the reader can imagine.

I kept my eye on him for a few days, and kept myself informed concerning his movements until he bought an elegant estate on the Harlem railroad, not far distant from Brewsters.

Settling here, he lived like a prince, and perhaps on this side of the Atlantic I was the only man who knew his real character.

As months rolled by I began to look for some crime of English Charlie's conception, but during this time I learned that he lived quietly but elegantly with the woman he called his wife.

"Perhaps he has reformed," I thought, and at last I began to seriously entertain the idea.

It might have been a year after I had seen him come off of the steamer, that one day we at headquarters were startled by the details of a most horrible murder.

I chanced to be idle at the time, and the chief put me on the case.

The murdered man was an old bachelor, and a Wall Street broker, and the incentive of the burglar had been the sum of twenty thousand dollars in United States bonds which the unfortunate man had in his room. He had received the bonds six days before to do nothing with them except to keep them until the next morning. Some one had seen this, and ere the morning came had killed and murdered the broker.

Now, was this the same man?

That was what was left to me to discover, and a sweet

job I knew it would be the moment I clapped my eyes on the room.

There on the bed lay the broker. He had been choked to death. I glanced around the place, then commenced and examined every inch of it thoroughly. Not the first thing could I find on which to base a clue.

I called up his sister, with whom he had lived, and questioned her about her servants. Not one of them could be suspected, for they did not know of the bonds, and neither had she.

I then asked her if anything was missing besides the bonds.

She did not know, but going to the room where her brother lay she scrutinized it closely.

"Yes," she said in answer to my question. "His watch is gone, also his diamond studs and a pair of cuff buttons—they were large rubies surrounded by diamond sparks!"

And this was the only thing I had to work on. Had the bonds been registered, the moment one of them appeared on the market I could have traced it back; but as they were not—a fact probably known to the murderer in the beginning—he was safe so far as they went.

Perhaps I was never in a deeper quandary than I was over this murder.

Study as I might I could evolve no plan, could decide on no step to take which promised the least show of success.

Of one thing, however, I was satisfied—that it had been the work of a man who was a peer among criminals in ability. And I thought of Handsome Charlie. But, no, he could hardly be the man, and I dismissed him from my mind.

I finally was forced to confess to myself that only luck and not skill would ever disclose who the murderer was. But luck was with me, as you will see.

I made a tour of the pawnshops in search of a watch, studs, and sleeve buttons, which I described. None had been received that answered the description.

I was strolling along the Bowery one night, engrossed in thinking of the conundrum which I was trying to solve, when, chancing to cast my eyes towards the interior of a pawnbroker's sales-store, I caught the brilliant flash of an immense ruby.

Expecting disappointment, and yet unwilling to let anything pass, no matter how trivial, I opened the door and entered. A man with a full brown beard stood at the counter, and the proprietor was offering him an amount of money for something which he did not care to accept.

"Well," he grumbled finally, casting an uneasy glance at me; "well, let me have it."

I saw him so place his body as to prevent my seeing the article, whatever it was, as he placed it in the other's hand.

Taking the money, he turned to go. The suddenness of the movement attracted the proprietor's attention, and in turning he unconsciously gave me a glimpse of a pair of ruby cuff buttons, surrounded by diamond sparks.

The brown-bearded man was near the door. There was no time for words, so I took several prodigious leaps and grasped his shoulder.

So quickly that I thought I was struck by a flash of lightning, the fellow turned and planted his fist square be-

tween my eyes. But I had too good a grasp on his shoulder, and hung on like grim death.

Spat—spat! While trying to draw my revolver with my disengaged hand, I got two sturdy blows on my face and then a terrific kick on the shin; with a howl of pain I dropped, but dragged him with me.

Over and over we rolled in fierce combat. Supple as a cat and an accomplished wrestler, he was getting the best of me when I yelled for some one to go for the police, and then fastened my teeth in his beard.

I could hear him pant with excitement, and his eyes flashed with dangerous light. He snatched out a revolver, clubbed it and drew back to strike with its heavy butt, and—left his beard in my teeth! It was false.

Sh—whist!

The descending revolver cut the air with such a sound. It struck before I had more than a momentary glance at the non-beardless face, and I was conscious only of a sudden, sharp, splitting pain in my skull, and a sensation of everything growing dark.

They told me afterwards that he had rushed outdoors after striking me that blow. A policeman trying to stop him had been upset, and the villain had finally disappeared in the crowd.

It took me a week to cure my black eyes, and I was lame from that kick in the shins for even longer than that.

During this time my mind had not been idle. I had made up my mind that the man I had encountered was Handsome Charlie, and by a stroke of luck I learned that he had been in the same disguise in a gambling-house. Being in hard luck, he had been cleaned out, and had then attempted to realize on the cuff buttons.

He probably had the watch in his possession still! No better evidence in the world could be wanted.

I was soon at work with renewed interest on the problem.

None would have recognized me when I stepped off the train at Brewsters, only a few miles from the villain's princely abode.

My face was so made up as to seem lined with age. My hair and beard were gray almost to whiteness. I wore an old soft hat, a long coat and pants much the worse for wear. Suspended before me by a strap about my neck I carried a basket, which, when the cover was raised, disclosed an assortment of tapes and thread, pins and needles. In my hand I carried a stout cane, and when any one was in sight used it and walked with a decided limp.

I stopped at the farmhouses along the road, now and then meeting with a customer for my little wares, and what was of more importance, learned as I drew nearer York. Everybody knew him. And I jotted down the name of a man who had seen him return from the city the morning following the murder.

At last I started for Charlie's own place.

I passed inside the iron gate and was going slowly along the wide carriage-way, arched by trees with dense foliage on either side, when I heard the sound of a horse's feet.

It was Handsome Charlie by himself.

At sight of me he stopped down, and brought his horse to a standstill when you thought him.

"Well, old man, what are you doing in there?" he asked imperiously.

"Sir," I replied in the cracked voice of age. "I am an old man, with one leg crippled through rheumatism, trying to make a living. Don't you wish to buy some pins, sir?" and catching a paper of pins by the center, I allowed the folds to unroll.

"No, we don't want any pins," he said, "and you needn't go to the house, but get out of the grounds as speedily as possible."

He glanced at the time, then gave a violent start, cast a swift look of menace towards me, beneath which I was as calm as a summer's night. He hastily covered the watch with his palm, and returned it to his pocket.

But I had seen the watch!

He walked his horse until he saw me outside the grounds, and then he galloped away towards Brewsters. When he was out of sight, off came the gray hair and beard, inside-out went hat and coat: tossing the basket into a handy place of concealment, I hurried to a nearby farmhouse, and was driven rapidly to Brewsters.

I found the constable, got a warrant of arrest from the justice on exhibiting my badge, and then went in quest of my game. I found him on the piazza of the hotel, standing by the rail.

"Be quick as lightning!" I whispered to the constable, handing him the darbies. "I'll grab him, and draw back his arms, and you snap on the bracelets in as big a hurry as possible."

Something engrossed his attention, he did not hear our stealthy approach. With a lightning bound I caught his elbows and wrenched them about.

One wrist was secured, but the constable missed the other.

With his face flaming with fury, Handsome Charlie turned like a flash, and swinging the dependent steel handcuff above his head brought it down with a sickening, crashing sound on the constable's head.

Then he caught sight of me.

He knew me.

I knew him, too, and did not care for another hand-to-hand encounter with him, so I stuck out my foot to trip and throw him.

I threw him further than I intended, for he pitched over the railing and struck the ground heavily, rendering him unconscious.

Stoutly did he deny the crime I charged him with when he was brought to New York and examined. A dozen of his neighbors testified to his good character.

"I defy any man to prove aught against me!" he said.

"I accept the challenge. You are the celebrated English criminal, Handsome Charlie!"

He wilted like a leaf touched with boiling water, and never will I forget the look of hate he gave me when I told him the date of his arrival and his subsequent movements.

He never made a confession. But we easily proved the crime. The watch and studs were found on him, and the beads in his house. And further, he was recognized by several persons as having been close at hand, where he could hear and see everything that passed, when the bridge crossed the brook.

And so Handsome Charlie's crime was too first, last, and only crime of that country.

NEWS OF THE DAY

Thirsty strangers in Aberdeen, S. D., have hit upon a new and most provoking way in which to quench their thirst. Frequently of late housewives have been called to the door and asked to loan a stepladder to a stranger, who stated that he was putting on screens for the next door neighbor. The request was granted, and then the stranger and the ladder disappeared. Later the ladder would be found in a pawnshop or second-hand store.

Probably the most remarkable lake in the world is one with a coating of salt that completely conceals the water. It may be seen at any time during the year, fully exposed, being seen at its best when the sun is shining upon it. This wonderful body of water is one of the saltiest of the salt lakes, and is situated near Obdorsk, in Siberia. The lake is nine miles wide and seventeen miles long, the salt coating increasing six inches every year. The many islands with which the lake is studded are said to act as braces and to keep the arched salt crust in position.

Edith Heymann, the fourteen-year-old daughter of Charles Heymann, of Stamford, Conn., a New York importer, displayed rare pluck the other morning, when she awoke and found a burglar standing by her bed and peering into her eyes. The burglar muttered that he would kill her if she made any outcry. She promised to be still, but when the man displayed a knife the girl slipped out of the bed on the side farthest from him, and ran out of the room. She aroused the household, but the burglar escaped.

Another phenomenal gush of oil is reported from Kurokawa, Akita, Japan, where the former and famous gush took place. At well No. 16, on which work has been in progress for some time with a rotary borer, a great jet of gas suddenly rose and was soon followed by a spectacular gush of oil. The gush on that day amounted to more than 3,000 barrels and that figure is being daily increased. Later another well sent up a jet which, according to a telegram received by the head office of the Nippon Petroleum Company, is too powerful to be allowed to flow at the present rate, so the power of the jet is curtailed.

The twenty-third general meeting of the Japan Red Cross Society was held recently in Hibiya Park, Tokio. The occasion was favored by fine weather, and was attended by over sixty thousand men and women, most of whom came up to the town from the remote parts of the country. According to the business reports delivered by President Hanazono, the society has now over 1,700,000 members, including 13,000 members who were affiliated in the preceding year, and its funds are estimated at \$1,250,000. The work of prevention and cure of tuberculosis disease, which was started last year, is so satisfactory that the Japanese government has issued numbered 20,000 last year.

The number of sufferers from calamities such as earthquakes or floods who were relieved by the society amounted to 75,000 during the preceding year. Its relief corps has, at present, about 4,400 works, including officers and nurses. In the present war, the society has rendered excellent services. The reliefs corps dispatched to England, France and Russia, stated the president, are discharging their duty to the satisfaction of those countries. After the reports, twenty-eight persons on the standing committee and three directors were elected.

A passenger car out of service is a liability, not an asset. It earns money only when it is working. Every day a car spends in the shops means a loss. To cut down the time required for drying a car after painting the test department of the Pennsylvania railroad began some experiments several years ago. The prospect of success was not bright, for quick-drying paints are much less durable than those requiring two days or more to dry.

But a way was discovered of cutting down the time of drying by 95 per cent., and thus the time the car is out of service is reduced by 50 per cent. A mammoth oven was built, into which the largest cars could be run. A newly-painted car is put in it, the doors are closed and the temperature is raised to above the boiling point of water. In three hours the car is quite dry and is sent back into active service.

The first tests of this oven-drying were made about two years ago, and the present condition of the paint so dried indicates strongly that oven-dried paint is more durable than that dried in the open air.

The United States Public Health Service estimates that 10,000 victims of tuberculosis of the lungs annually go West to die. It is estimated that in Albuquerque, N. Mex., there are 2,000 victims of consumption which have come from other States; more than 3,000 at El Paso, and 3,500 at San Antonio. The percentage of deaths from tuberculosis occurring within a short period of arrival at Western resorts is decreasing. This indicates that the warning to keep far advanced cases at home has been heeded. Nevertheless, as high as 15 per cent. of all deaths occurred within thirty days after arrival at the Western destination. Of particular interest to physicians, as well as the public, especially in view of the newer theories regarding the communicability of tuberculosis, are the facts marshaled to show the degree of danger to residents of the resort cities from the influx of consumptives. Tables are presented which go to prove that the degree of communicability of the disease, at least to adults, has probably been overestimated, and that the danger to healthy persons is no greater in the resort cities than elsewhere. The Public Health bulletin refers to the ravages of tuberculosis among the Mexicans of the Southwest. The people have little resistance, and once the infection develops recovery is rare.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

MAKING PANAMA HATS.

Toquilla straw, from which Panama hats are made, is obtained from five or six species of the palm. The most important of these is known as *Carludovica palmata*, and grows in the warm, moist regions of the Pacific Coast in Colombia and Ecuador, and also in the forests of Peru along the headwaters of the Amazon. This palm attains a height of 6 to 10 feet. The leaves are fan-shaped. Toquilla straw is exported to the United States and other countries, where the hats are made by machinery.

Panama hats are made in Colombia in the following manner, writes Ross Hazeltine, United States consul at Cartagena. When the palm is about 5 feet high the most tender leaves are cut and the veins taken out, submerged in boiling water several times, and placed in the sun to dry and whiten. Further to whiten the straw lime juice is added to the boiling water. Then the straw is moistened to make it flexible and split with the finger nail into strips of the required width. A bunch of the straw is tied in the middle and placed in the center of a wooden mold. The fibers are placed in equidistant pairs and weaving is begun in the upper part of the cup and continues in circular form until the hat is finished. The addition of fibers while weaving the crown is carefully avoided, and the number of fibers is increased to make the brim and edge. The beauty and durability of the hat depends largely upon the degree of exactness with which the fibers are interwoven. Once completed, the hat is washed in clean, cold water, a coat of gum is applied, and the hat is finally polished with dry sulphur.

To weave a fine hat requires three to six months with four to five hours' work daily. Two inferior hats of ordinary straw can be woven in one day. First quality hats of toquilla are sold in the foreign retail markets at prices varying from \$25 to \$100 each.

HOW SHE SAVED MONEY.

The girl who was born under the star of extravagance, whatever that is, was praised for her unnatural economy.

"Just think," her people said, "of having all that money over there in Paris and not spending it."

"Don't blame me," the girl protested with unblushing candor. "It was not my fault. I wanted to spend it, but I could not; I couldn't get at it. In spite of myself, I was forced into the paths of economy by the French Government."

"At the beginning of the war I solved all the business problems by making my trunk my banker. What money I had was drawn out of the bank and deposited in my trunk. That seemed a pretty safe place, so most of my money was left there when I went to London on a visit."

"I had made my home in Paris with an old school friend. While I was in London her husband died."

"When I came back it was as much as I could do to get into the house. The Government had been on and had clapped red seals, fastened to the ends of a piece of tape, across everything about the place."

"My own trunk had not escaped. Right across the lock was a band of tape with these seals of 'Liberty, Equality, Fraternity,' above and below. They did not represent much liberty for me; they came nearer to representing captivity, for I had run up debts, and the only money I had to pay them with was in that trunk."

"Then came such a bargain sale. It consisted of lace and feathers and jewelry that had belonged to a very fine lady and were going dirt cheap. They were sold at private sale and I was offered first pick of anything I wanted."

"For three months, while all the terrifying entanglements of French law were being unraveled, my money was imprisoned. When my friend's affairs were finally settled and the seals removed, the bargains I coveted had been sold elsewhere, so I had saved my money."

LOANS TO STUDENTS.

With an addition of a gift recently of \$2,000 from the class of 1879 of the Columbia University School of Mines, there is now available at the university a fund of over \$8,000 to be used in making loans to students of that department to help them over any financial difficulties. Many deserving students have been assisted in this way to graduate from the school.

Dean Frederick A. Goetze of the Graduate Engineering School of Columbia University gave out figures showing the number of students who have been assisted by this fund. One of the largest donations to the fund was made by the class of '87.

Up to the beginning of this year a total amount of nearly \$10,000 had been loaned to about sixty-eight students. Of this amount the students have already paid back \$4,681.49. Dean Goetze stated the other day that the students invariably paid back their loans promptly at maturity, except in very few cases, where they are burdened with expense, and in these instances extensions are granted.

The average amount lent to a student is estimated at \$126. Some loans as high as \$215 are made and the smallest loan made was \$35. Of the students to whom the loans were made nineteen, or nearly 50 per cent., were scholarship men who enjoy wholly or partially free tuition. About 80 per cent. of the students were from the third or fourth year men whom the faculty knew. However, loans have been made to the freshmen in exceptional cases.

The demands on the fund since the war broke out have been unusually heavy and indicate the trying financial burdens felt by the students and their parents. Nevertheless, the loans have been paid back promptly and there have been comparatively few requests for extensions.

The students upon graduation usually find little difficulty in paying off the loans. The usual security which is asked is character. If the student during the term has shown merit in his work and seems to be one to be trusted no further questions are asked by the faculty.

THE HELLO PUZZLE



Can you get the ring off? This puzzle is the latest creation of Yankee Ingenuity. Apparently it is the easiest thing in the world to remove the ring from the block, but it takes hours of study to discover the trick, unless you know how it is done. Price by mail, postpaid, 10c.; 3 for 25c. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SMALL COLLAPSIBLE PENCILS

The name is a joke. It looks small enough while it is hanging on your watch-chain, and it is very handsome in design, neatly finished, and very compact. But just hand the end of it to your friend, and it begins to untelescope until he imagines there is an end to it. Besides its ability to make a fun, it is a good useful pencil, too. Price, 15c. each, by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE MAGIC NAIL

A common nail is given for examination, and then instantly shown pierced through the finger; and yet, when taken out, the finger is found to be perfectly uninjured, and the nail is again given to be examined. Nicely finished. Price, 10c. by mail, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

LINK THE LINK PUZZLE

The sensation of the day. Pronounced by all, the most baffling and scientific novelty out. Thousands have worked at it for hours without mastering it, still it can be done in two seconds by giving the links the proper twist, but unless you know how, the harder you twist them the tighter they grow. Price, 6c.; 3 for 15c.; one dozen, 50c., by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

WIZARD'S PACK OF TRICK CARDS

A full pack of 53 cards, but by the aid of the instructions given, anyone can perform the most wonderful tricks. Many of the feats exhibited are truly marvelous, and astonish and amuse a whole audience. Positively no sleight-of-hand. The whole trick is in the cards. Price, 35c. by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SLIDE THE PENCIL

The pencil that keeps them guessing. Made of wood and lead just like an ordinary pencil, but when your victim starts to write with it—presto! the lead disappears. It is so constructed that the slightest pressure on the paper makes the lead slide into the wood. Very funny and a practical joke. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

FIFTH

Also known as a Japanese butterfly. A pleasing novelty enclosed in an envelope. When the envelope is opened Fifth will fly out through the air for several yards. Made of colored paper to represent a butterfly six inches wide. Price, 10c. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE SURPRISE FOUNTAIN PEN

A novelty of the greatest merit! It looks just like a genuine fountain pen. But it isn't. That's where the joke comes in. If you take off the cover, a nice, ripe, juicy lemon appears. Then you give the friend you lend it to the merry "ha-ha." You might call it an everlasting joke because you can use it over and over again. Price, by mail, postpaid, 10c. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



APPEARING BILLIARD BALL.—A solid billiard ball, made of ivory, can be made to appear in the bare hands with the sleeves rolled back to witness. Very fine and easy to do. Price, 35c. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

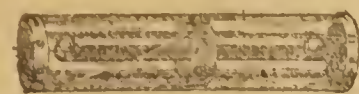
GLASS SCOPES



This popular novelty is made of blown glass, and is to be filled with water. It then becomes a powerful magnifier suitable for enlarging any small object to an extraordinary size. Can be carried in the vest pocket. Price, 5c. each by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

SEE-SAW PUZZLE



The most absorbing puzzle seen for years. The kind you sit up half the night to do. The puzzle is to get both balls, one in each pocket. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

JAPANESE TWIRLER



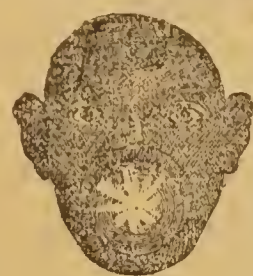
A wonderful imported paper novelty. By a simple manipulation of the wooden handles a number of beautiful figures can be produced. It takes on several combinations of magnificent colors. Price, 10c., postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

JAPANESE TRICK KNIFE



You can show the knife and instantly draw it across your finger, apparently cutting deep into the flesh. The red blood appears on the blade of the knife, giving a startling effect to the spectators. The knife is removed and the finger is found in good condition. Quite an effective illusion. Price 10c. each by mail. FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

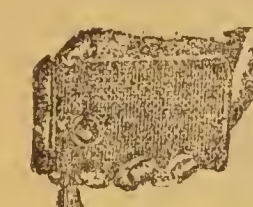
PICK-ME-OUT PUZZLE



The head is finished in black japan, and in the mouth is a highly polished steel ball. The puzzle is to pick out the ball. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

POCKET FLASH LIGHT SQUIRT



Made of decorated enameled metal, representing an exact flash pocket lighter; by pressing a button instead of the bulb's eye, an electrically lighted up stream of water is ejected into the face of the spectator; an entirely new and amusing novelty. Price, 35c., postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

IMITATION CIGAR BUTT



It is made of a composition, exactly resembling a lighted cigar. The white ashes at the end and the imitation of tobacco-leaf being perfect. You can carelessly place it on top of the tablecloth or any other expensive piece of furniture, and await the result. After they see the joke everybody will have a good laugh. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

TRICK CIGARETTE BOX



This one is a corker! Get a box right away, if you want to have a barrel of joy. Here's the secret: It looks like an ordinary red box of Turkish cigarettes. But it contains a trigger, under which you place a paper cap. Offer your friend a smoke and he raises the lid of the box. That explodes the cap, and if you are wise you will get out of sight with the box before he gets over thinking he was shot. Price, 15c., postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

DUPLEX BICYCLE WHISTLE



This is a double whistle, producing loud but very rich, harmonious sounds, entirely different from ordinary whistles. It is just the thing for bicyclists or sportsmen, its peculiar double and resonant tones at once attracting attention. It is an imported whistle, handsomely nickel plated, and will be found a very useful and handy pocket companion. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c.; one dozen, 75c., sent by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

TOBACCO HABIT You can conquer it easily in 3 days. Improve your health, prolong your life. No more stomach trouble, no foul breath, no heart weakness. Regain manly vigor, calm nerves, clear eyes and superior mental strength. Whether you chew or smoke pipe, cigarettes, cigars, get my interesting Tobacco Book. Worth its weight in gold. Mailed free. E. J. WOODS. 228 H. Station E. New York, N. Y.

GREENBACKS

Pack of \$1,000 Stage Bills, 10c; 3 packs, 25c. Send for a pack and show the boys what a WAD you carry. C. A. NICHOLS, JR., Box 90, Chili, N. Y.

Old Coins Wanted. \$1 to \$600 paid for hundreds of coins dated before 1895. Send 10c for our illustrated coin value book 4x7; get posted. Clarke & Co., Box 95, Le Roy, N. Y.

COMICAL FUNNY FACES

This genuine laugh producer is made of nicely colored cardboard. A sharp, bent hook is at the back to attach it to the lapel of your coat. Hide one hand under the lapel and twitch the small, black thread. It will cause a red tongue to dart in and out of the mouth in the most comical manner imaginable at the word of command. It is very mystifying, and never fails to produce a hearty laugh. Price, 6c. each by mail. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE INK BLOT JOKER

Fool Your Friends. —The greatest novelty of the age! Have a joke which makes everybody laugh. More fun than any other novelty that has been shown in years. Place it on a desk, tablecloth, or any piece of furniture, as shown in the above cut, near some valuable papers, or on fine wearing apparel. Watch the result! Oh, Gee! Price, 15c. each, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

TRICK PUZZLE PURSE.—The first attempt usually made to open it, is to press down the little knob in the centre of purse, when a small needle runs out and stabs them in the finger, but does not open it. You can open it before their eyes and still they will be unable to open it. Price by mail, postpaid, 25c. each. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE MYSTIC RING

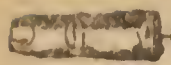
A Brand-New Trick, Just Out.—Puzzling, Mystifying and Perplexing. A metal ring is handed around for examination, and is found to be solid, unbroken japanned iron. A cane, a pencil or a string is held tightly at each end by a spectator. The performer lightly taps the cane with the ring, and the ring suddenly is seen to be encircling the cane. How did the ring pass the spectator's two hands and get on the cane? The most mystifying trick ever invented. Others charge 75 cents for this trick; but our price, including instruction, is 12c., postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

RISEING PENCIL.—The performer exhibits an ordinary pencil and shows it top and bottom. The pencil is laid on the palm, the performer calling attention to his hypnotic power over innate objects. The pencil is seen slowly to rise, following the movements of the other hand. The witnesses are asked to pass their hand around it to assure themselves no thread or hair is used. Price, 25c. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

LIGHTNING TRICK BOX

A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented. Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE FINGER THROUGH THE HAT.



Having borrowed a hat from your friend, push your finger through the crown of it, and it is seen to move about. Though very amusing to others, the owner of the hat does not see the joke, but thinks it means to destroy his hat, yet when it is returned it is perfectly uninjured. Price, 10c. each by mail. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

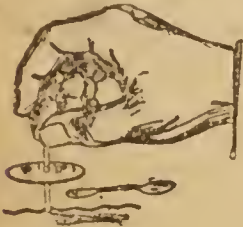


CRAWLING BUGS

These giant beetles are beautifully enameled in natural, brilliant colors. There is a roller underneath, actuated by hidden springs. When the roller is wound up the bug crawls about in the most lifelike manner. Try one on the maid if you want to enjoy yourself. Price, 12c. each, by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE MAGNETIC TOP.



A handsome metal, highly magnetized toy. A horseshoe and a spiral wire furnished with each top. When spun next to the wires, they make the most surprising movements. You can make wires of different shapes and get the most peculiar effects. Price, 5c., postpaid.

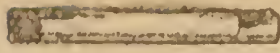
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE JOKER'S CIGAR.



The biggest sell of the season. A real cigar made of tobacco, but secreted in the center of cigar about one-half inch from end is a fountain of sparklets. The moment the fire reaches this fountain hundreds of sparks of fire burst forth in every direction, to the astonishment of the smoker. The fire is stage fire, and will not burn the skin or clothing. After the fireworks the victim can continue smoking the cigar to the end. Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c; 1 dozen, 90c., mailed, postpaid. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

THE BURNING CIGARETTE.



The greatest trick joke out. A perfect imitation of a smoldering cigarette with bright red fire. It fools the wisest. Send 10c. and we will mail it. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

DELUSION TRICK.



A magic little box in three parts that is very mystifying to those not in the trick. A coin placed on a piece of paper disappears by dropping a nickel ring around it from the magic box. Made of hard wood two inches in diameter. Price, 12c. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



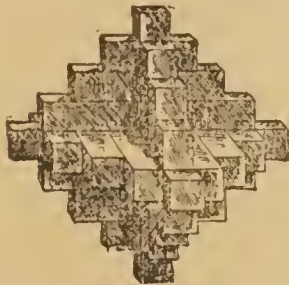
GLASS PEN.—Patent glass pen, with nice dip, writes like any ordinary pen; each put up in wooden box. Price, 10c., postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MAGIC COINER.



A mystifying and amusing trick. Tin blanks are placed under the little tin cup and apparently coined into dimes. A real money-maker. Price, 20c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



GIANT SAW PUZZLE.

This puzzle contains twenty-one pieces of wood nicely finished; take them apart and put them together same as illustrated. Everybody would like to try it, as it is very fascinating. Price, by mail, postpaid, 25c. each.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

FOUR WEEKS (A LOUD BOOE).



Has the shape and exact shape of a book in cloth. Upon the opening of the book, after having it set up according to directions furnished, a loud repeat similar to that of a pistol-shot will be heard, much to the amazement and surprise of the victim. Caps not mailable, can be bought at any toy store. Price, 65c. by mail, postpaid. WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

JAPANESE DIVER



The strangest toy on the market. They are made in Japan and look like a little red mandarin. Each manikin is furnished with a cartridge to which a pair of legs are attached. By making two pin-holes in the cartridge, attaching it to the figure, and immersing it in a glass of water the little figure will dart up and down for an hour like a real diver. Price, by mail, 25 cents each, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



KNITTER

Every boy who wants a whip-lash, pair of reins, or any other knitted article of similar kind should have a Knitter. Anybody can work it. The most beautiful designs can be made by using colored worsteds with this handy little object. It is handsomely lacquered, strongly made, and the wires are very durable.

Price, 10c. each, by mail, postpaid. C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

NEW SURPRISE NOVELTY.



Foxy Grandpa, Mr. Peewee and other comical faces artistically colored, to which is attached a long rubber tube, connected with a rubber ball, which can be filled with water, the rubber ball being carried in the pocket, a slight pressure on the bulb causes a long stream, the result can easily be seen.

Price, 15c., Postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

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